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MODERNIZING COMPOSITION WITH AN ONLINE
PHOTOGRAPHY-THEMED COURSE

by

Sharolyn Richards

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

English

Approved:

Brock Dethier, Ph.D.
Major Professor

Jessica Rivera-Mueller, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Keith Grant-Davie, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Mark R. McLellan, Ph.D.
Vice President for Research and
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

2018

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ABSTRACT

Modernizing Composition with an Online

Photography-Themed Course

by

Sharolyn Richards, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2018

Major Professor: Dr. Brock Dethier
Department: English

Because technology is a major part of students' lives, composition teachers need to teach students to compose with new technologies for academic and public purposes. This paper details the different ways teaching with photography in an online composition class will meet the WPA Outcomes Statement requirements and will help students learn to compose effectively with the technologies they already use. The second half of the paper details what this class will look like. It contains a short syllabus, then a longer description of the online modules, which include materials the students will read, as well as discussion questions and prompts they will have to answer.

(118 pages)

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Modernizing Composition with an Online

Photography-Themed Course

Sharolyn Richards

In this thesis, I argue that it is important for students in a Freshman English Composition class to learn to compose with images and text. This builds on what other research and professors have done in having students turn in multimedia compositions. Since there is opportunity for students to compose with images and text in print as well as online, it is important for them to know how images and text work together. This thesis includes the research I did and lesson modules for an example semester.

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Sharolyn Richards

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INTRODUCTION

Images bombard people everywhere they go. Students today use Instagram and Facebook to share and see photos that tell the story of their lives and their friends' lives. They see pictures on billboards, and in ads on the internet and television. We need to teach students in this increasingly visual world to communicate using images. In fact, "images must not only be present, but [students] must be willing to notice them, consume them" (J. Murray 46).

We need to modernize composition and teach images as part of a sophisticated new rhetoric because images are becoming a primary language used to communicate. Images capture attention; images are students' communicative choice; images and words work together. Students need to learn a new reading process to understand images and they need to learn a new creation process to write with images and text. Nordmark, quoting David Buckingham, says there is a need for a "critical approach to the use of technology in education to bridge the 'new digital divide' between students' experience of technology outside school and their experience in the classroom" (Nordmark 57). She emphasizes that students need to learn to use digital technologies to transform their learning into knowledge (Nordmark 57). She also refers to Ola Erstad's work and reiterates that social media and school are the top most time-consuming aspects of young people's lives. Erstad is critical of the division between the two.

We need to think about combining the two most time-consuming things in our students' lives and about integrating technology into our teaching so students know how to compose effectively with technology and so they can continue their informal learning

outside of school as they compose with the tools they want to use (Nordmark 58).

Students today are media-savvy and multitask easily. They easily handle multiple conversations via text or social media; they can easily download and share videos and pictures. Students today “possess technological know-how and access to computers but lack critical technological literacy skills” (Vie 10). Vie argues that compositionists need to incorporate technologies that their students are familiar with but do not think about critically (Vie 10). She argues that it is time to pay attention to the social media our students are using so we can “effectively teach technological literacy in the writing classroom” (Vie 11). Our students do not view social media and communicating with pictures as disconnected from their day-to-day activities, so we should try not to separate these activities in their learning (Vie 12).

Words and images combine to make meaning. Many students communicate with them in social media and much of the advertising done today uses them to promote their products. Nancy Allen says, “we don’t really need to understand the intricacies in order to use words and images in our daily interchanges” (Allen “Relationships” 2). She points out that if we want to use words and images to achieve our communicative purposes, “we need to learn more about how they work and relate. They work in different ways, but they do work effectively together. Professionals and communicators who understand their workings can use the tensions created between them productively” (Allen “Relationships” 2). Shelves, furniture, and toys that come with assembly instructions include pictures to help people understand how to put the object together. If pictures are needed in these kinds of technical documents to help readers understand, then why not

the academic writing of freshman composition? We need to help the students use pictures and words together to form meaning. Words and images have always been interconnected in communication but Allen argues that technology has made this relationship “even more intertwined” (“Relationships” 5). “If we want to become more effective at using words and images together...we would do well to learn more about the workings of words and images and the interrelationships between them” (Allen “Relationships” 20).

Today’s students “might see the graphics [or images] as primary, as the best and fastest way to gain information” (Allen “Relationships” 14). Photographer Richard Avedon said “Images are fast replacing words as our primary language” (as quoted in Allen “Relationships” 14). If images are becoming the primary language of communication, won’t it be important for students to know how to critically read images, and compose with them? Audiences in general are demanding more visual interest in the things they read and in media, and today are “learning to read what some might call confusion and to find within it information that is meaningful to [them]...today’s audiences want some pizzazz to keep them engaged” (Allen “Relationships” 16). Shouldn’t students learn to compose in a way that would reach these audiences?

Students in my online photography-themed composition class will learn to use pictures to reach audiences in a new way. These students will be learning the things the WPA dictates students should learn in a freshman composition course while focusing on adding photography to their writing compositions. Many composition course teachers use the WPA Outcomes Statement to make sure their students are learning what most other first-year composition students are learning. The WPA Outcomes Statement emphasizes

five overall goals for a composition course. By the end of a semester, students in a written composition class should:

- Gain rhetorical knowledge
- Improve their writing process
- Improve their critical thinking, reading and composing
- Gain knowledge of the writing conventions, and
- Gain knowledge and skill composing in electronic environments

“[T]he Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) adopted in 2000 the ‘Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition,’ which identifies ‘the common knowledge, skills, and attitudes sought by first year composition programs in American post-secondary education.’” (Kimball 116, quoting Harrington et al 24)

My photography-themed course, which teaches students to compose with images, will meet the WPA goals and create a new way for composition instructors to teach multimedia composition and visual rhetoric. Figure 1 in the Appendix shows the different assignments of the course and how those assignments fit into the WPA Outcomes Statement goals.

In my online photography-themed composition course I am creating, students will gain rhetorical knowledge by learning to use rhetoric through assignments that will require them to think about audience and purpose and to analyze different texts for their rhetorical value, which will help them see that writers use different genres to shape their practices and purposes. This course will encourage students to reach a broader audience than just their professor or classmates, and to use a variety of technologies to address a

range of audiences. Students will be using photography and photographs in most of their assignments and deciding which pictures to use, depending on their audience.

This course will also improve students' writing. It will teach them photography terms to help them learn relevant writing terms. Terms such as f/stop or aperture will help students learn to focus their writing. Terms such as space will help students understand how the amount of content affects their writing. Students will take pictures to form arguments and understand how they can use a picture to persuade an audience. The course will teach them to reflect on the development of their composing practices and how those practices influence their work. Students will gain experience in collaboration and other social aspects of writing processes through peer reviews, and the opportunity to ask their fellow classmates questions about their projects. The peer review process will also teach students to give and act on productive feedback to their works in progress.

An online photography-themed course will improve students' critical thinking, reading and composing skills. It will teach them problem-solving skills and critical thinking skills by having them use pictures to compose projects and essays with the intent of reaching a specified audience. The assignments in this class focus on reading and composing texts that combine the visual and verbal which will teach them to blend both types of communications. Their work on research papers and an interpretive essay will teach them to recognize bias in unconventional sources and in primary and secondary research materials.

As in other composition courses, students will develop a knowledge of writing conventions in an online photography-themed course. Students' writing mechanics will

improve and they will have a lot of opportunities to practice writing. Students will need to rewrite an essay to reach an audience through technology and photographs. This type of reworking their essays will give them a new perspective on the revision process. This assignment will also teach students to write in different genres, which will give them experience in negotiating variations in genre conventions. This course will also teach students copyright and fair use laws.

This online photography-themed composition course will also help students gain knowledge of composing in electronic environments. “Over the past two decades, rhetoric and composition [have] adapted to a wide variety of composing technologies and practices that have changed the way we teach and the way our students communicate” (Lauer 60). The changes Lauer refers to are shown in the research that I discuss in this thesis and by the textbooks I looked at that included multimedia projects and readings. This change is also apparent in the WPA Council adding “composing in electronic environments in 2008” (Lauer 60). This course will give students opportunities to understand and exploit the differences between rhetorical strategies they learn in class and the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and available texts. Students will be able to use social media to analyze pictures. They will create blogs and/or websites to reach their desired audiences. The online work in this course will give students the opportunity to use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts. Students will be communicating online in this course. They will share their work for peer review via the online learning environment and they will submit their completed work online. The online format will

also teach them to find information on library databases and informal electronic sources, then use that information to write papers.

In addition to, or while students are learning the things described in the WPA Outcomes Statement, students should also be learning how to integrate images into their composition to help them learn how to communicate with those images. Images can be integrated into each of the five goals listed above. They can be used as a rhetorical tool, they can improve students' writing, they can improve students' critical thinking, reading and composing skills, they can help students gain knowledge of writing conventions, and they can help students learn to compose in electronic environments.

I looked through a few First-Year Composition textbooks to discover if the textbooks used to teach first-year composition have integrated communicating with images as part of their curriculum. I chose these texts because they were top selling composition books or had promise in covering visual rhetoric. I read many articles stating that it was important to incorporate multimedia projects and visual rhetoric into classrooms, and the composition textbooks I read did discuss visual rhetoric or multimedia composition a little. Two books, *Writing About Writing: A College Reader* and *They Say / I Saw with Readings – 3rd edition*, include readings about multimodal composition and about technology, such as texting and tweeting; but they do not discuss combining images with written composition.

Many of the other books I read talked about using pictures in essays to illustrate what a student is talking about or using another visual such as a map or a chart. Andrea Lunsford et al. in *Everyone's An Author* mentions that visuals must be relevant to what a

student has to say, and that the pictures are supporting a point (Lunsford et al 761).

Richard Johnson Sheehan and Charles Paine in *Writing Today: Second Edition* suggest say that “[p]hotographs and other images can also enhance the reader’s understanding and add some visual appeal” (322). In the “Designing” chapter, they say that students “should always look for ways to add photography to [their] document,” but they don’t mention reasons for adding photography or how photography and images can act as a text to be read and can enhance the written text, not just explain it (382). Richard Bullock, Francine Weinberg, and Maureen Daly Goggin in *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings – 4th Edition* state that

“visuals are text themselves, not just decoration. When they appear as part of a written text, they may introduce information not discussed elsewhere in the text, or they might illustrate concepts hard to grasp from words alone. In either case, it’s important to pay close attention to any visuals in a written text.” (22)

They were the first authors I read to talk about the fact that images are their own text.

I expected *The Curious Writer – 3rd Edition* by Bruce Ballenger to include more information about photographs since I use one of his articles about using photography to teach writing later in this thesis. He includes useful information about looking at the framing, angle, setting, arrangement and light of the pictures and he relates this information to writing (64). A large portion of his book was dedicated to proper citation, but he put emphasis on how communicating with pictures or using photography in a written composition course is important and helpful in teaching students how to write.

These texts all agree on the importance of communicating with visuals and current technology. They highlight the need for a class such as mine that will make

integrating and successfully communicating with images and technology a major focus.

Bullock et al. talk about how online writing is everywhere and that almost everyone writes online (594). Lunsford et al. say

“[a]s new technologies bring images into our phones and lives on a minute-by-minute basis, visual texts have become so familiar and pervasive that it may seem that ‘reading’ them is just natural. But reading visual texts with a critical eye takes time and patience – and attention.”
(33)

They talk about the fact that people take pictures and post them online and that pictures are a “routine feature” of a lot of the writing people do (276-277). Sheehan and Paine concentrate their discussion of visual rhetoric on designing papers through the use of headings and font style. Under the designing heading of several different types of papers, Sheehan and Paine mention pictures or visuals, but they mostly focus on the visuals illustrating a point or showing what is being analyzed (207).

In a lot of the research I did, I saw studies of instructors using multimedia composition to teach visual rhetoric and visual composition. The textbooks analyzed previously show that these kinds of multimedia compositions are being integrated into many composition classrooms. My photography-themed composition course will add to the idea of visual composition by focusing solely on composing with text and pictures. It will be beneficial for students to learn to compose with just pictures and text because in many of the communications they may do in their lives through paper, such as pamphlets, brochures or magazine ads, they only have the option of using pictures. Students will have to choose their photography carefully since they won’t have music or video to help convey the message they want. This kind of composition will take the idea of visual

composition a little further as students will strive to put text and pictures together in a cohesive composition that reaches an audience and communicates their intended meaning.

In 1997, Heba wrote,

“When our young children enter college 10 or 15 years from now, will they be writing narrative and argumentative essays? Will we even want them to?...[T]he increase in the use of multimedia, hypermedia, and hypertext are not really options for teachers of composition any longer—they are technologies we all must learn to understand and use effectively as we move into the not-too-distant twenty-first century...[A] brave new world of composition [is] dawning, and the changes that multimedia communication technologies promise are too dramatic and far-reaching for us to leave unaddressed at any level of computer-based composition instruction” (42).

Those 10 or 15 years are now past. Are students really learning to compose for the technological world of today in their freshman composition classes? These textbooks I read indicated we are heading in that direction, but maybe not as quickly as we should be.

We need to modernize the way we teach composition. Markel reports that

“[i]f you were to visit an advanced course in technical communication at a college or university today, you likely would see students making documents not seen in a classroom 5 years ago... If you were to visit a freshman writing course at the same school, you likely would see students making essays that look just like the ones you wrote 10, 20, or 30 years ago.” (“Testing” 47)

Granted Markel’s article was published in 1998 which is an antique itself when thinking about how far technology has come, but I took my freshman composition course in 2004 and I didn’t incorporate any images into my papers, and I was not given the option to do so, and didn’t learn how to combine images and words effectively in the first place. That may still be a long time ago in terms of how technology has changed, so I’ll give an

example from my few years teaching high school English from 2012-2014. During my time teaching I didn't ask students to combine words and images, and the texts didn't give any information on effectively combining the two. The papers that were turned in were "exclusively word-centered" and Markel reports that "[freshmen] write word-based texts, mostly essays and research reports; they are not taught how to create or interpret visual information. With few exceptions, the visual dimension of writing is simply not part of the course" ("Testing" Markel 47). Kimball says that many professors insist that when students turn in papers, "[w]hatever the finished product, it should look academic" (Kimball 121). Why should the students be forced to compose academic essays when in their professional lives they will be composing texts that combine images and text to help their readers understand the point of the document?

A more sophisticated rhetoric is needed in composition courses. We need to teach our students that "adding a more informed visual dimension to their writing gives them a vastly expanded repertoire of rhetorical skills" ("What Students" Markel 381). Many professors have had students do multimedia projects as a means to incorporate visual rhetoric into their classrooms. Andersen points out that "in folding discussions of visual rhetoric into discussions of multimodal composition, we have tended to overlook the different ways in which visual displays of text exert rhetorical control" (Andersen 23). She says that focusing on multimedia has kept students and teachers alike from seeing how images and text "converge and overlap" (Andersen 23). My course will build on using multimedia assignments and will place emphasis on composing with photography

and text. My course will help students see how images can converge and overlap as

Andersen suggests.

“We need to remain receptive to the idea that the teaching of writing—at all levels—can be expanded by shifting from an approach almost exclusively word-based to one that acknowledges and embraces the complementarity of visual and verbal cues on a page and a screen.”
 (“What Students” Markel 383)

Even though I focus on a first-year composition class, the ideas presented in this thesis can be applied to many writing classes.

The assignments in my lesson modules follow a process where students will start with images and work toward combining images with their written work. Students will start by using images as texts for analysis, after which they will use photographs to tell a story. They will tell stories with pictures only, and with words and pictures. They will then do work to research an issue in their community using pictures and words, and thereby, reach out to different audiences.

ACHIEVING WPA OUTCOMES: GAINING RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE

In this photography-themed composition class, I will raise students' **rhetorical awareness** so they can learn to reach different audiences. They will learn **analytical skills** through writing a rhetorical analysis and an interpretive essay of a picture. Students will practice analyzing their peers' pictures by reading a picture story and interpreting the meaning of that story. Students will **reach an audience outside academia** through blogs they will create from their research paper.

Raising Rhetorical Awareness

We can find rhetoric every day, whether in a TV ad, an online ad, a poster, a political speech, or a post on a social media site. Students need to learn to recognize that rhetoric and learn to use rhetoric themselves to reach different audiences. Rhetoric is used to “organize and maintain social groups, construct meanings and identities, coordinate behavior, mediate power, produce change, and create knowledge” (Department of Rhetoric).

My photography-themed composition course will teach basic rhetoric in a new way. Many students have heard of the terms logos, pathos, and ethos, but my photography-themed composition class will help them see how these terms can be applied to photos. For example, a photographer can create ethos by taking a selfie, which shows that the picture is authentic. This class will also show them that timing is an important factor in rhetoric as well as making it clear why they are writing their

document or creating their website. These things are critical when thinking about reaching an audience. Timing can be everything in how a document or ad is received. For instance, someone who just bought a new car may not look twice at an ad for another car. Also, a magazine about hair may not be the best reading material at a cancer institute where many patients are undergoing chemotherapy and thus lose their hair. Their reason for writing a document is just as important. To compose a good document or text, a student needs to have more reasons to write it than to just fulfill the assignment. This is difficult to do since that is the reason they are writing for a class, but if we can help students see that their reason for writing is important to reaching an audience it will help them in their careers. A person writing a magazine ad would need to know that the purpose of that ad is to sell a product, not go into details about the product that might not be relevant to people looking at the magazine. Analyses will help students see the rhetoric in writing as well as in pictures.

This type of course creates the

“opportunity to integrate the non-discursive [visual] as a framework in our teaching practice applicable to the use of electronic and multimodal texts. As we integrate non-discursive texts into our composition practice, we begin to practice a corresponding writing theory that accommodates the challenges and opportunities of multimodal rhetoric.” (J. Murray 7)

Focusing on how students use pictures to create some change in their lives will help prepare them to make rhetorically sound choices in their writing (Moore et al. 11). As they analyze pictures on social media they will be able to see how pictures and rhetoric are used to maintain social groups, construct identities, produce change, and even mediate power.

Nancy Allen argues that if students increase their knowledge of images and how they work, they “can become alert to negative applications and be able to use images positively and productively” (“Relationships” 10). Part of learning rhetoric is knowing the negative as well as the positive. If students are aware of the negative impacts that can come from using rhetoric irresponsibly, they will be more proactive in speaking out against others using rhetoric negatively. As with written text, students need to consider their purpose and audience before composing with images and text (Allen “Relationships” 19). These considerations will affect the picture and the text they choose. Knowing your audience is important when making rhetorical decisions and it is no different when composing with images. “In many ways, the rhetorical dimensions of digital texts are no different from those of print or oral texts—all of which require attention to the rhetorical situation” (Eyman and Ball 114). Allen also says that in our day we need more activity to keep us interested. The use of images helps to keep our audiences interested, as text alone no longer does the trick (“Relationships” 15).

Andersen defines visual rhetoric generally as “the study of how we process, communicate, and produce meaning through visual modes such as photographs, webtexts, graphics, and animations (see Helmers and Hill)” (21-22). She points out that the visual modes with which people communicate “can operate independently or synergistically in a shared space” (21-22). These visual modes are often accompanied by written text used to clarify meaning. She points out that most of the discussion focuses on multimodal and new media composition. She quotes authors such as Humphrey and Carvajal, Sealey-Morris, Goggin, Hocks and Kendrick, Prior, Wysocki, Kress, Ball,

Sheppard, Daniel Anderson et al. and many more. It seems necessary for our students to understand how pictures are a source of communication by themselves and that few words may be needed to get a message across. Images are universal and cross language barriers. Many companies may find it necessary to use more pictures in brochures and other promotional materials and publications to reach a wide audience. Instead of printing several brochures in multiple languages, they could print one that communicates the necessary information using pictures, and thus save money. Some stores, such as IKEA use pictures to help you get around their website. If you were looking for dining room furniture, you could click on the picture of a dining room table, which also says “dining room” on it. Even if a person did not speak English they could find what they needed and know the price on the IKEA site. If students learn to do this before they enter the business world, they will be more prepared to help businesses become more global, and thus reach a wider clientele. This photography-themed composition class will focus on the fact that students communicate with pictures and only a little text. It will meet the WPA Outcomes goal of raising rhetorical awareness while teaching students to communicate effectively in the way they are used to communicating.

Today, students cannot ignore, or be ignorant of, the importance of visual rhetoric when they compose in digital environments. Students will deal with images whether we teach them how to consume and produce them or not (J. Murray 138). Students will undoubtedly, sometime in their professional lives, need to use images in their composing. The choices students make in any document they create require understanding the rhetorical situation and the audience for which they are composing (J. Murray 138).

As students try to manipulate images for a certain purpose, they will learn that the way they put their images together may not result in the intended reaction. Using pictures to create arguments for a variety of document types teaches students about using emotional connections and connotations for a specific rhetorical purpose (J. Murray 171). Many times, an argument can be made just with photos. For example, a shampoo ad in a magazine displays a picture of a woman with beautiful hair, thus making the claim that this shampoo will make one's hair silky and shiny like the models'. They can make this claim without any words. Students now need to make and defend arguments or persuade a group by inventing, arranging, storing and delivering photos and other images through the internet (J. Murray 177). Students need to learn to make rhetorical choices when communicating with pictures through Facebook, Instagram, and other social media sites. If students learn to keep their audience in mind when creating texts, we will be giving them the tools they need to succeed throughout their lives.

Arranging and producing photos is a key to understanding how people, including the students themselves, consume photos and how they are distributed online and in print (J. Murray 158). Students constantly come in contact with images, and they share images daily. They must learn the rhetoric associated with producing and consuming different texts, including different visual texts, such as the ads they constantly consume online, in magazines, and on billboards. "[A]ll texts are produced, delivered, and consumed" (J. Murray 161-162). Students must learn to recognize the rhetorical devices used by their peers on social networking sites, since pictures and text are produced on web-based social spaces (Welch et al. 263). They may resist composing with and analyzing pictures, but in

my class, I will show them how it relates to what they do every day as well as how it will help them with their future careers.

Photographs create an opportunity to look at arguments in a different way and allow students to recognize the arguments they see every day. Students can see that photographs help them explore a subject and can help them to be persuasive in their writing and communication (“Telling Our Stories” Allen 124). Students can use pictures to engage their audience. For today’s audiences, photographs help to clarify as well as attract attention, and they give audiences something they should focus on (“Telling Our Stories” Allen 122). Photos can also help students know how to reach different audiences. Students will learn that some photos are better for certain audiences, and for their argument, than others. For instance, a picture of a hunter with a prize buck will be much better received on the cover of a hunter’s magazine than an environmental magazine. But the environmental magazine can also use such pictures to make their point that we should work to save the animals. Students will also learn that writers who want to be read need to adapt their text to meet the needs of their audience (Ede and Lunsford 89). They can apply this knowledge before they graduate as they post pictures on Instagram where they use visual rhetoric. In the article I have the students read, the study of one Instagram account shows that most of her ‘selfies’ are of her and one or both of her kids, thus showing that motherhood is an integral part of her life. Whether students want to tell the true story of their lives or are working on building a business through Instagram they can think about the pictures they post and the impact those pictures will have on their audience.

The technologically savvy and visually-stimulated students today need to learn to recognize rhetoric in their lives so people do not take advantage of them. Teachers should “ensure that students are learning the rhetorical concepts behind creating multimodal texts” (Bouelle et al. 57). Creating assignments where students compose visually and with the technology available to them, then offering rhetorical analyses and critiques of their own work as well as their peers’ work, will help students see the power of using rhetoric—and can help them think about how they would present information differently to reach certain audiences (Bouelle et al. 58). Students constantly reach out to different audiences using different technologies, and they need to understand how their design and picture choices change depending on the needs of their audience (Bouelle et al. 61). They also need to know their audience. An effective argument is impossible to create if a student does not have some knowledge of their audience (J. Murray 171). Two different audiences may react differently to the same picture. “Each image carries with it a package of emotions, histories, and experiences, and as such, may function for one audience as identification, and for another division...[I]mages are powerful symbols” (J. Murray 175).

Students composing with photos should consider how their intended audience will interpret the photographs selected for the text, and how their audience will react to their compositions, because images do not have a single meaning for all readers or viewers (Welch et al. 257). If teachers allow students to study the rhetorical effects of pictures and then ask them to use pictures in their own compositions, they will see “how one

photo can not only represent reality but can also present a persuasive argument for changing it” (Welch et al. 261).

Students should focus on rhetorical considerations when using technology to compose documents and as they think about their audience and purpose (Bourelle et al. 65-66). Even though students will use technology to compose their documents in this online photography-themed class, they will focus on the rhetorical considerations of their audience and purpose rather than the technology they use, as they do in classroom-based composition courses. However, using technology in an online class enables students to reach a public audience more easily than in a brick and mortar class, which deepens learning as they address real audiences with real-life problems (Dubisar and Palmeri 79, 87).

Students constantly reach out to an audience, whether they tweet, use Instagram and Facebook, build a website, or even create a flyer. In their communications, students need to have their audience in mind, now and in their professional lives (J. Murray 155). A website for windows has to have beautiful pictures of windows to show how good they can look in a home or office, with some sizes and prices. The pictures will do the selling if their prices are competitive. Joddy Murray reiterates that rhetorical analysis of non-discursive texts such as images is important in today’s communications. He says:

“Students, in short, must be able to become critically aware of the non-discursive elements of these texts; they must also learn how to produce and distribute non-discursive text as well... [R]hetorical images have always been consumed, but we have not always asked students to be aware of and critique that consumption; these images have always been produced, but we do not always ask our students to produce them; and these images have always been distributed, but we have not always asked

our students to be critically aware of and then participate in the distribution of these images.” (157)

We need to give students the opportunity to reach out to audiences they may not have thought about before. Many young college students are still in the ‘me’ mindset, where everything they do is based on whether it will make them happy. They may not think about reaching an audience that is not made up of young college students like themselves. They may not think about trying to reach out to a city council to get them to consider a new city ordinance. This gives them the motivation to create an effective document and allows them to address an intended audience besides their professor.

Giving students exposure to visual rhetoric can make them more aware of the visuals used in communication (Ernster 384). By incorporating visual rhetoric into a written composition course, students will begin making rhetorical connections between photographs and their written texts (Ernster 389). Students will begin to see that the pictures and visuals of a text can speak louder than the words written on the page, which is important for students to recognize since so much of their communication via Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat involves photos (Ernster 390).

My students will gain rhetorical knowledge as they read about the rhetorical terms such as logos, ethos, and pathos, and work to recognize these terms when they look at a picture as they write their rhetorical analysis, and then their interpretive essay. The interpretive essay focuses on critical skills and writing as a way to discover, understand and respond to the world around them (Leahy and Rindge 116). To give students the tools to write the interpretive essay, I will have them read select chapters from *Criticizing Photography*, which will introduce “students to a process of describing interpreting,

evaluating, and theorizing what works well when discussing, and writing about photographs” (Leahy and Rindge 116). They’ll use rhetoric as they try to reach desired audiences with a research paper that they will turn into a blog or website. This assignment will give students the opportunity to create online sites, such as blogs or other websites, and to reach audiences outside of academia. If they choose something they care about, then they may even be motivated to continue to add to that website after the class is over. Students will create their sites so they attract attention, but also convey the information that is needed. As part of their research paper, they will research a community problem or issue and then use the rhetorical devices they learned in the class to promote the change that is needed to fix that problem. For instance, if the city they lived in was planning to destroy the building that housed the community library, students could research why the building was being torn down and if the city was planning on building a new library. They could ask research questions such as, “Is the building being torn down because they want to build a hotel there or is it in such a state that it is a safety hazard?” After they have this information they can use their site to raise awareness of why the building is being torn down and maybe help get people involved in raising money to build a new library. Students will have to create a site that would reach a variety of people, from those who love reading to those who didn’t even know there was a library. This assignment will take a lot of problem solving on the part of the students to find ways to help raise the awareness that a community might need a library.

Analyzing Different Texts to Use Rhetoric

Students need to know how to analyze different texts, which includes pictures.

After students have learned to use rhetoric, they will learn to apply this rhetorical knowledge to their writing as they compose analyses of different texts. An online photography-themed composition class will teach analysis.

“Just as with print composition, image composition must be allowed to have an analysis applied to it, rather than assume students are already critical of it. Simply put, students must be critical of images just as they are critical of printed texts[;]... being critically literate ought to include being critically literate about all texts, including the visual.” (J. Murray 65)

Students will learn to analyze photos and written works. In analyzing photographs, students will begin to see that the act of interpreting a photo is not neutral. An interpretation of a photo stems from our culture, our personal knowledge, and our experiences. Teachers can emphasize that interpreting a photograph reveals something about the photograph as well as the interpreter (Welch et al. 256). As students interpret a photograph, they form their hypotheses and then state their conclusions. These analyses help them understand how they see the world and the reality of their lives (Welch et al. 258). The analyses will also help them see how their classmates interpret pictures and see the world and how their classmates' views might be different from their own, thus introducing students to new ways of thinking about the world. Students will become more comfortable sharing their own analyses of pictures and text when they realize that an analysis is individual, and that their analysis of a picture or text should not necessarily match their peers' analyses or their professor's analysis.

Teachers need to practice analyzing photos with their students before they require students to analyze photos on their own. As teachers analyze photos with their students, teachers can point out that, in the process of analyzing photographs, they create a narrative for the photographs based on their own experiences and knowledge (Welch et al. 260). In my class, students will have practice throughout the semester analyzing different pictures. They will analyze a picture and then they will be able to see how their classmates interpreted a picture. I will walk them through this process with the first picture so they will understand the process of analyzing a picture and that everyone's interpretation can be different.

As students find the photos they want to analyze, teachers should ask them to research the photograph to find the context in which the photo was taken. Their analysis of the picture then includes considering the context of the picture and deciding whether the photo was effective for the intended audience. By looking at the photo's history, students can determine that photo's purpose and intended audience without making guesses. Their analysis of the picture includes the facts surrounding the taking of the photograph (Welch et al. 261). To understand a photograph and to write a good analysis of that photograph, students "need to know its language, its discourse community, its social context, and what can appropriately be said about it. The ways in which images and text are used within a culture influence what they say to us and what we can say about them" ("Relationships" Allen 16). A good analysis requires a little research on the photograph to know who the intended audience was or why the picture was taken. Students in my class will need to research a picture they chose to write an interpretive

essay about. They will be doing these things that Welch et al. and Allen suggest to really understand a photograph and to be able to write a good analysis on it. Teaching students to analyze a photograph teaches them to observe and see with fresh eyes what they may have been passively observing from the media (J. Murray 71). Photographs are more than eye-catching ornaments for a document; photographs can be objects of study that help students analyze their culture (J. Murray 72). Photographs can be used to understand our culture and to understand the culture of the past.

Teachers could encourage students to ask the following questions when writing a photo analysis:

“What kind of culture produced the image?...How has the meaning been constructed? Does the photograph appear to be objective, to act as evidence? Does the photo make you reflect upon yourself as a consumer?... Do you identify with the message of the photo? Or did you take an oppositional approach?...How does [the image] make the viewer want to work, to fight in wars, to reproduce, to be clean, to be healthy, to show signs of meeting the norms, etc.?...How is the photo a tool of propaganda?” (Welch et al. 261-262)

These kinds of questions can help students start working through their analysis and can even help them when they get stuck writing their analysis. These questions can also help them think about what makes a good analysis. Teachers should encourage students to ask a lot of questions about the picture in order to write a good analysis. As students take the time to analyze photos, they may feel compelled to ask questions about a photo that encourages them to do further research on the picture (Gamber 248). This study can help them form arguments and can deepen their analysis of the picture (Gamber 248).

Teachers should also encourage students to think about who would see the images they

post and how people might respond to those images. Could those images have negative impacts that weren't intended?

Thomas Ernster, quoting Charles Hill, points out that “[w]hen students are ... first faced with the task of interpreting and analyzing images in the classroom, they resist, at least face some uncomfortable dissonance, perhaps confusion, when asked to treat images as another kind of text” (387). True, but if we relate it to what they do anyway—post pictures on social media sites—they may be a little more willing to analyze photos. Students will first analyze pictures on social media in my class, they will analyze other pictures and then be required to compose using pictures. Students will have practiced studying why certain pictures affect us in certain ways, then they will be able to put that knowledge into practice as they compose with pictures. If teachers ask students to analyze photos found in popular media and their own contributions to popular media such as social networking sites, then students will see that they analyze photos every day. At the same time, they will become more educated about how they post on their social media sites (Sanchez et al. 119).

My students will learn the basics of rhetorical devices and then write a rhetorical analysis and an interpretive essay of a picture. They will read Terry Barrett’s *Criticizing Photographs* to learn how to criticize or interpret a photograph. They will also analyze photos they find on social media sites to see if the intended purpose of the picture posted equaled people’s reaction to it. They will also have to compose a story using only photographs, after which they will read each other’s ‘stories’ and analyze whether their picture composition was effective or not. The research essay will require them to analyze

an issue in their community and decide how best to bring that problem to the attention of the people of that community in the form of a blog or website. Analyzing these different texts helps students use the rhetorical knowledge they gained.

Encouraging Students to Reach a Broader Audience

Students should have the opportunity to write to an audience outside of academia. This online class would help students “use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences” (WPA Outcomes 2014). Writing to outside audiences allows students to apply their rhetorical knowledge in a real-world assignment. Students need to learn to write to different audiences composed of people of different ages and beliefs. Having students write for different audiences requires them to use the rhetorical devices that would best reach those audiences.

An online photography-themed composition class will teach and encourage students to reach a broader audience. In my class, students will use a blog to reach an outside audience to hopefully promote a change depending on the issue they choose to address. Students will write more casually for an outside audience, focusing on communicating with and knowing how to reach that audience.

My students will do academic writing for the limited audience of their classmates and me when writing their rhetorical analysis, interpretive essay, and a research essay. They will transform their academic writing from their research essay into a blog, where their writing can become more casual and more focused on reaching the outside audience of their community. This assignment requires an awareness of their audience and a knowledge of how best to reach that audience. Thus, this assignment gets students

involved in community issues which helps them realize they can make a difference for good right where they live. Even if students say that they don't know of an issue, I will encourage them to find one. There may not be a big issue for them to research, but that will just require them to be creative. I will tell them that they can pick an issue that is small, even if they think not very many people care about that issue.

Getting students involved in the local community sets them up to be proactive in their future communities and helps them see that they can make a difference. Having students get involved in community issues helps them apply the things they learn in class to real-life issues. As students look at an issue in the community, they will see the rhetoric that opposing sides use to convince the population to support their point of view. As I stated with the library example previously, students will be able to research reasons something is happening which will give them the tools to help others see what needs to be done about that issue. This allows them to see the existing rhetoric and then use rhetoric to create their own platform on the issue.

Students in an online photography-themed composition class will not only get involved in a current issue within their community, they will also be able to choose something that interests them. If they aren't interested in a library, then maybe they are interested in the fact that the President of the United States wants to make the mountains around them part of a national forest so they would no longer be able to hunt that ground. If they choose something that interests them, they will produce better websites that use pictures to help others in the community see why such an issue is important. They will write a research paper on their chosen issue and then use online tools, such as a blog or

website, to inform and educate members of the community about that issue. This assignment will allow students to get involved in some real-life problems and think of ways to solve that problem or inform others about the problem. They will learn to recognize the rhetoric used by others and learn how to use it more effectively themselves.

WRITING PROCESS

My photography-themed composition class will help students through their writing process. Some photography tasks the students will do in this class will help students in the prewriting, drafting, and revising of their **writing process**. These tasks include taking multiple pictures to generate ideas in the prewriting stage, to help them narrow their topics, and to see the different ways they can look at their topic in their revising process. This class will also **teach writing terms** and will relate different photography terms to writing terms and strategies to help students become better writers. This class will also give students the opportunity to **reflect** on the work they do both during and at the end of their composition processes.

Technology has certainly changed the way people communicate over the last couple of decades.

“Our tastes and interests may be changing, but writing, reading, and drawing are not disappearing because of computers. Thanks to web sites, email, discussion lists, chat rooms, and so on, as well as the ease with which we can use computers to compose, design, and revise, people are writing, creating their own art, and exchanging the results more than ever...With electronic documents, particularly hypertexts, we are likely to approach our reading as we read newspapers or magazines, browsing through until something catches our attention—sometimes a heading or phrase, often an image.” (Allen “relationships” 17-18)

Students need to know how to go through the writing process effectively using technology since that is the mode most students use when composing. Very rarely, do students use a pen and paper to brainstorm, unless specifically asked to. They can be taught to use computers to do their brainstorming, even create outlines on the computer if that is the way they like to work. Technology makes it easy to work with images these

days, as most pictures are taken digitally. Students will use the technology they know to compose with words and images, to improve their writing overall.

Nordmark argues that pedagogical practices are moving from teaching product to process, especially with the prewriting stages and students' responses to written text. When students use digital tools, the teacher should focus on the "complex writing that occurs on a screen that enables an enormous digital writing phase of simultaneous writing, revision, and planning in an environment of constant negotiation in the classroom and on the Internet" (Nordmark 57). Students are "expected to take responsibility and write their texts. They must be able to shift focus from activities on the screen to discussions in the classroom" (Nordmark 61). Nordmark's study showed that schools must place "more emphasis on teaching formulation skills in the digital writing process, suggesting a shift in teaching from product to process...[S]tudents need to create different writing strategies for different tasks and environments" (70). My class will encourage students to compose in different environments, and create different writing strategies to fit within those environments.

Teaching Aspects of the Writing Process

This class will use photos to help students generate ideas while prewriting and drafting, and help them understand why revision is important. Students who find interest in the different stages of the writing process will get the most out of each stage, and will use each phase efficiently to help them create the best essays, documents, or blogs they can.

According to Donald Murray, we can divide the writing process into three stages: prewriting, writing, and rewriting (4). The writing process is personal, and each student goes through it in different ways. As teachers, we teach these three stages, but we cannot dictate how much time students spend on a particular part of the writing process. The writing process is a process of discovery, which the students can learn by taking photographs (D. Murray 4). Bruce Ballenger had his students work with photographs to improve their writing. His photography assignments led his students “to see what is extraordinary in the ordinary” (32). These assignments taught Ballenger’s students to look at a subject in different ways. “A good writer must be able to look at his subject from different angles, or points of view, and determine one that is best” (33). Writing about a subject from different viewpoints, or at least prewriting in this way, helps students to find the angle they want to take in their writing. Photography can help students discover this important part of the writing process. Assignments using photography can help students discover their world, and what interests them, and what they want to write.

Revision is an important part of the writing process. “Revision can help [students] discover *what they mean* to say—it is not just an activity that they do for their writing professor” (Costello 151). Some of my photography assignments encourage students to revise their work with an outside audience in mind. They will not be revising photographs; they will be revising how those photographs and the text they use alongside the photographs are presented for different audiences. These different assignments will encourage deep revision as students think about their audience and purpose. An

assignment such as rewriting the research essay into a blog will help students go beyond surface revisions and will make them think about the goals of their documents (Costello 152). Having students rewrite their research paper online, using photographs to reach an audience, can help “students approach revision with purpose and a *desire* to communicate their meaning more clearly” (Costello 164).

Bruce Ballenger used photography to help students with their prewriting and revision skills. He says of one assignments he gave, after telling them to “get out and take interesting pictures” and then to “write about what it was like,” that it was apparent that “[t]he power of photography [was] a metaphor for the writing process” (29). Ballenger made it apparent that photography eases students into the prewriting stage.

As part of the prewriting stage, students decide on a subject. Ballenger relates researchers who never narrow down their subjects to blurry landscape shots. They cover a lot of material, but the reader really doesn’t get a good look at anything in the paper. These papers, and photographs, lack detail, and only have a vague sense of emphasis (29). However, Ballenger also points out that students need to start with the blurry landscape shot to discover which part of the landscape is worth exploring more deeply (29). The prewriting stage also involves what Ballenger calls the “process of inquiry.” He suggests that “beginning with an answer makes it much less likely that the process of inquiry will lead to new discoveries or even new, more compelling subjects or questions” (30). These discoveries should happen during the prewriting stage when students are in the process of discovering what they want to write about.

After students have gone through the drafting process, they may discover that they have generated not only more than enough material, but also questions about their subject they want to investigate further. Looking at their subjects from different points of view often brings up such questions, which only come “after [they’ve] collected enough information [about their subject] to begin to know what [they] want to understand about it” (“Learning” Ballenger 36). Students need to ask questions during the revision process; they need to discover these questions by changing their perspective, angle, and distance on their topic. Asking questions helps the writer determine the amount of information they should try to include in the limited space they have. Questions place a particular emphasis on certain materials and topics; they establish the point of view they want to take out of the different ways they could look at their topic (“Learning” Ballenger 36). Going through this revision process shows students that some of the information they gathered will be relevant but that much more of that information is likely to no longer be relevant (“Learning” Ballenger 37). The writer’s paper starts to come together during the revision process. Sometimes it takes a long time with a lot of “re-seeing,” but photographers and writers can take pride in this process because, in the end, it will pay off (“Learning” Ballenger 38). Photography can help students find enjoyment in this revision process as well, as they learn to look at the same photographic subject in different ways.

Because students find it hard to get started on and then continue through the writing process, we need to find ways to encourage our students to “be willing to begin again to contend with the blank page, the blinking cursor, the lens, and the unuttered

phrase. To find and convey new knowledge” (J. Murray 130). The whole writing process, from prewriting to revision, may seem daunting to students. Photography can help students contend with their inability to write that first word, or go through the revision process by encouraging them to take multiple pictures to find the perfect shot. Photography can help students find joy in their writing process and discover how they best work through the writing process.

This online photography-themed composition course will help students through the writing process in a new way. As part of the prewriting stage, I will require my students to take several pictures of subjects they might be interested in exploring. To help with the revision process, I will also have my students take different pictures of the same subject to challenge them to find the most interesting angle. My students will also have the discussion board in which to ask their classmates questions. The peer review process, which will take place online, will also help students through the revision process as they have classmates reading and responding to their work and giving feedback.

Using Photography Terms to Teach Writing

Learning photography terms will help writing students see new things in their writing. It will also help with their writing process as photography can be a tool for students to discover and reconsider their ideas (WPA Outcomes 2014). Some terms, like exposure and juxtaposition, may be new to writing students and help them see new elements in their writing. Other terms, like composition, may be familiar, but seeing how they’re used in photography can help writing students expand their definitions and their understanding of the writing concepts. Joddy Murray says that long-term camera users

who have taken photographs for years may not actually know how to compose photographs using a camera lens or a tool such as Photoshop (J. Murray 174). This photography-themed composition class will teach students how to compose using photographs and even how to compose photographs themselves. Photography can teach many other aspects of writing. Students may not understand at first why they are learning photography terms, but I will show them how those terms relate to their writing and how photography can improve their writing.

The following photography term explanations are drawn from Nicole Hill Gerulat's book, *Photo 101*. This book is a beginning book and so it is easy to understand even if you don't know much about photography.

Exposure

"Exposure" includes the aperture and shutter speed. "You need both intensity [aperture] and time [shutter speed] to determine an exposure" (Gerulat 30). Correct exposure makes the photo look good. Too much exposure or too little can ruin an otherwise good picture.

The aperture controls the depth of field, which determines "how much in the scene will be in focus. Something in the picture should always be in focus, but changing the depth of field will determine how much will be in focus" (Gerulat 30). Our essays should always focus on something. When students write, they need to learn that they should focus on at least one topic. Typically, an essay should focus on one or two topics with just a blurry glimpse of related topics. If they try to focus on too many topics then they get a blurry landscape shot instead of a clear picture. Writers often choose what to

include in their landscape shot of their subject, often in the form of summaries or abstracts. A photographer or a writer needs to make a conscious decision about how much landscape they provide and how close they want to get to their subject. A photographer should learn how to control this depth of field because it determines how a viewer will see the photograph (Gerulat 31). Students in composition courses need to learn to apply this depth of field to their writing because how much detail and emphasis they give a topic helps the reader know what is important. In photography, “the eye is forced to look at what is in focus”; in writing, the reader pays attention to what is written about most (Gerulat 32).

The shutter speed determines how long light is let into the camera. “The shutter speed controls the ability to blur or stop action (the movement in the photograph)” (Gerulat 39). In writing, our shutter speed is the amount of time a writer spends on one subject and how much time a reader spends reading our material. As writers, we need to focus our writing and give details and emphasis to our work in a way that will get the reader interested in more than glancing at our work. We can skim over the subject or we can slow down and include details in our writing.

To find the right exposure, Gerulat suggests that a photographer analyze the scene and then choose other exposure factors that may affect the final outcome of the photograph. If you want everything in focus, then you will have to adjust the aperture to get the right exposure (Gerulat 47). We can apply these same steps to writing. Analyze your scene. The writer needs to decide if his or her subject requires an in-depth description or a close-up of certain topics. Afterward, they can write with that focus in

mind and adjust how much time they spend on a subject or how close they get to the subject accordingly.

Teaching exposure in this photography-themed composition course will help students become better writers because they become more attentive to the details and emphasis in their writing. Exposure helps them focus their writing and gets them thinking about what is most important in the document they write. Students will look at different pictures with different shutter speeds and aperture settings. They will describe these pictures based on what is in focus (with aperture), or try to create movement or a still-frame in their writing (with shutter speed). This will help them see how they can create different pictures with their words for their readers.

Composition

Composition is a word used in both photography and writing, so they go together naturally. Gerulak asks the questions: “How many photographs do you see every day? How many will you remember?” (49). These questions can raise awareness that students need to make their writing memorable. Many other photography terms relate to the composition of a photograph. Focus, space, perspective, and juxtaposition all have to do with the way a photograph is composed.

Focus

Part of a good composition in photography is focusing your photograph to tell a certain story.

“A good photograph will have only one focal point, which should be the most important aspect of the photo, as this is where the viewer’s eye will land ... If there are multiple stories, one should stand out from the rest. The goal is to get the viewer to want to look at your photograph for at least a good five seconds before moving on.” (Gerulat 49)

This is different than exposure. You can create focus using aperture to make everything but your focal point blurry, but you can also create focus in a picture using other methods, such as framing and lighting. A writer wants their audience to remember what they have read, especially if they want to encourage change in their audience. The writer then needs to compose in such a way that the reader will remember the essay, and it will make an impact on them.

To practice using focus in their writing, students will write a passage based on a photograph of their choice. They will write a paragraph focusing on the whole picture, then another paragraph focusing just on what they think is important in the photograph; the picture they choose should not have anything blurred. They will then be able to see how the change in focus for these two paragraphs has influenced their analysis, and helped create, with their words, two different descriptions for the same image.

Space

“It is important to understand space and how to shoot it” (Gerulat 58). A photographer needs to determine how much space, such as foreground, middle ground, and background, to include in their photographs. A photographer needs to consider what will add to the picture and what will detract. In writing, we have the background information and the topic at hand. There is no wrong or right amount of background information that a writer should include in his or her essays, but the writer does need to

make the decision based on whether it will detract from the subject matter, and how much knowledge the reader needs to understand the subject. Space also includes the design of a document. White space is used to help readers understand a document. White space between paragraphs gives the reader a chance to process what they have read and gives them a clue that the writer is going to shift their focus.

Teaching students about space in writing can help them analyze the important details to include in their writing. If students think about space in their writing, they will think about the little things that make a document more readable and engage their audience. Writers need to ask themselves how much information the reader needs to understand the point of the document. They also need to consider how much space that additional information will take in the document. They don't want too much information that crowds out the space that could have been available for their main topic.

My students will write two paragraphs. The first paragraph will describe a photograph that has a lot of scene behind the action of the photograph. The second paragraph will describe a photograph that doesn't have much scene and the action takes up the majority of the picture. The students will analyze how their paragraphs are different. My students will also design blogs where they will have to think about space and where they put pictures and how big to make the pictures. In writing their papers, students will be able to experiment with white space and how that affects their readers.

Perspective

"Changing perspective can dramatically affect the photograph and the viewer's reaction to it" (Gerulat 60). When a writer considers multiple points of view in their

writing, even if some perspectives don't end up in the final product, the writer will gain additional insights on their topic that they can then share with their audience, if it will suit their purposes. Students need to learn about different perspectives to become better writers. If they don't,

“there may be a temptation to (1) always adopt their own particular perspective and, therefore, miss the influence of their audience; or (2) design without perspective in mind, sacrificing any sense that the [document] ... has a purpose, or a goal. Writing any type of persuasive text requires imagining perspectives and often choosing at least one.” (J. Murray 181)

Teaching students to look at different perspectives can give them more information when they research and prewrite, and it can even help them find a better way to write a certain document.

My students will again look at the same subject in two photographs that are taken from a different perspective. In my current lesson plan, it is a picture of the same house, taken from two different perspectives. Students will analyze how perspective changes the way they see the subject photographed. They will write two different paragraphs describing the two pictures taken of the house and analyze how their paragraphs changed from one photo to the other, even though they were describing the same subject in both paragraphs.

Juxtaposition

In photography, “subjects are photographed near each other to show a comparison. Usually they are opposites but can show similarities” (Gerulat 64).

Juxtaposition is a powerful rhetorical tool available to photographers. In writing, subjects

are placed together in a text to show how they compare to each other for rhetorical purposes. Students could use a single picture that shows juxtaposition, or they could arrange pictures so several pictures show the juxtaposition.

Often students don't see that a writer is juxtaposing because the connection between two seemingly different things is explained. Writers are trained to connect every idea to ones that come before and after. Studying how a photographer can make meaning simply by placing two subjects next to each other, without explanation, may help writers understand juxtaposition better. Learning to use juxtaposition by relating images and words to each other through how we compose them, or the visual composition, can help students know how to communicate in the increasingly visual world in which they live.

Reflecting

According to the WPA Outcomes Statement, students should reflect on the development of composing practices and how those practices influence their work as part of their writing process (WPA Outcomes 2014). Students need to reflect on their work while they are developing a project and at the end of a project, when they turn it in for evaluation. This helps students evaluate their writing process and how that practice influences their work. Reflection helps students think through problems they may be having in reaching an audience or choosing the correct pictures to support their arguments. It gives students a way to just 'talk-through' what they are thinking. A reflective paper at the end of an assignment allows them to tell the professor why they made the choices they did and what impact they think those choices will have on their audience.

Reflection has been shown to deepen critical thinking and is an important prerequisite for deep, meaningful learning (Xie et al. 18). My online photography-themed class will teach students to reflect about their writing processes. Formal written reflections will require students to articulate the problems they faced and the potential solutions they explored, which allows them to reflect on both their final product and the process they went through to come up with that final product (VanKooten and Berkley 161). Having students write formal written reflections also lets the teacher see the students' thought processes and problem-solving efforts.

Students need the opportunity to reflect on their projects as they think about their audience and the goals they have in writing to that specific audience. Writing reflections allows students to explain their rhetorical choices (Bourelle et al. 58). If students write deeper reflections where they account for their choices of audience and purpose, they tend to produce projects that are more rhetorically effective (Bourelle et al. 60). If students find a problem as they reflect on their writing projects and have to think of a solution, their thinking deepens as they consider how to best solve that problem (Xie et al. 19). Integrating learning into the cognitive structure and relating it to previous knowledge happens through reflection. Reflecting on the learning process gives students the opportunity to look critically at what they have done, and apply it to other projects. Reflection helps students understand themselves and how they work (Xie et al. 19).

Reflection becomes meta-cognitive when students evaluate their own thinking process and ask questions such as: "What is this about? Why do we need it? What does [it] mean? What are the implications?" (Granville and Dison 100). Students will also

think about these questions as they relate to their own work and about how their work will affect an audience. They will learn to ask questions like: Why does my intended audience need this information? Why should they care? What does it mean for them and their lives?

“Reflective interaction can be encouraged and supported” even more in an online class (Rovai 146). The discussions allow students more opportunities to reflect on their readings and on fellow classmates’ posts. Without the necessity to reflect through writing on the discussion board, students often do not take the time to reflect on their learning. Giving students the opportunity to reflect on their work and their writing process allows them to “grapple with the new ideas without demanding from them a control of academic language” (Granville and Dison 109). If we require our students to write about their purpose and audience in reflections, they may begin to articulate the reason and logic they use to arrange their work. They will begin to account for their choices (VanKooten and Berkley 161).

In an online photography-themed composition class, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their work and the things they read for class. The discussion board will require them to reflect on what they read and allow them to ask questions as they work on different writing projects. The online format of this class will allow students to have continuous access to the answers they receive from their professor as well as fellow classmates. It will encourage students to reflect on their choice of audience, or their reasons for choosing a particular photograph. Students will also write

reflective papers on their major projects, where they will have to account for the choices they made in terms of the photographs they chose for their specific audience.

CRITICAL THINKING, READING, AND COMPOSING

Critical thinking includes such things as analysis, clarification, evaluation, explanation, inference, interpretation, judgment, objectivity, problem solving, and reasoning. These things promote critical thinking because they encourage a person to look deeper than what is given to them to find deeper meanings or answers. My photography-themed composition class will help students find these deeper meanings and answers in many ways, particularly through giving students practice in **problem solving** as they think about reaching a specific audience, **hunting for bias** as they do research, and **blending visual and verbal elements**. This class will also improve their reading and composing skills.

One of the meanings of critical is crucial or essential. Students are more likely to see something as crucial to their lives if they have a personal interest in it. Using students' interests engages students and makes what they learn meaningful for them in their life. Many students have an interest in photography, especially since they communicate with their peers through photos. Using photographs and photography to compose will allow students to use different strategies, including design, to compose texts, which helps their composing skills. Teaching students analytical skills with pictures before they begin writing will help students create a context to which they can compare the rhetoric in a picture and the rhetoric in writing. Not all students have an interest in photography, but enough students use pictures in their everyday communications that this photography-focused writing class will appeal to them.

Eyman and Ball point out that today “nearly all composition is digital composition,” but they argue that “composition studies has not yet made that shift completely explicit in our discussions of composing processes” (Eyman and Ball 114). Helping students understand this shift in modes of composing practices is essential to build their digital literacies and make them more critical readers and writers (Eyman and Ball 114). “Our students have grown up in a media-rich, intensely visual culture that continually bombards them with digital texts demanding attention” (Andersen 20). We need to teach our students to be critical of these texts and to be able to quickly pick out the relevant information. Because texts today are created to be easily scanned, we need to teach our students to be critical readers of such texts, which include images and videos. Markel points out that these online texts require students to know how to interpret complex visual cues, more so than traditional, word-based documents (“What Students” 373).

Problem Solving

Students need to learn problem-solving skills to improve their critical thinking abilities. They need to have assignments that require them to think of different solutions, and then select the best solution for their purposes. When students start working in their chosen fields, they will most likely have many problems they need to solve that do not follow predetermined steps toward a solution. Students need to learn to feel a little uncomfortable as they try to come up with the best solution. Problem solving will help students’ learning deepen and they will become more critical and creative thinkers as they find it necessary to think outside the box to solve a problem.

Problem solving happens when students have a rhetorical problem that does not have a specified solution and they must struggle to come up with possible solutions that would work by experimenting, questioning, thinking rhetorically, pushing boundaries, using new tools, and feeling out of their comfort zone (VanKooten and Berkley 153). This process will be difficult for students and I will create a safe environment so students can make mistakes in their composing as they work to find a solution for the best way to reach an audience. “Failure is how we learn what it is we want to achieve. And failure is also how we learn to make things—including writing—work ... Failure might also be called experimentation” (Leverenz 9). My students will know that I see their failed attempts to reach an audience as an experiment. I will encourage them to try a different approach, and to keep trying until they come up with a solution that best solves the problem(s) they are grappling with.

Teachers should encourage problem-solving in a composition class to give students the tools and knowledge necessary to solve whatever writing problem they may come up against outside of a writing class (VanKooten and Berkley 161). Students need to learn to take the time to find solutions to their composition obstacles. Along with giving students processes to go through to solve problem in their writing, teachers also need to teach students that they not only need to work within the existing writing conventions, but that they need to come up with new ways to write and communicate in the increasingly digital world (Leverenz 2). My photography-themed composition class will encourage students to see their writing and communications in a new way, and encourage them to think about different ways to convey information to their audiences.

My students will have opportunities to practice their problem-solving skills. Turning their research paper into a visual blog will require some problem solving and critical thinking. Students will have to analyze their audience to know how to best reach that audience. They will have to analyze the pictures and text they choose to use for effectiveness. This analysis demands students use problem-solving skills to create a blog or website that is both engaging and effective. They will have to decide which pictures to use and know that their choice of picture affects how their audience will view their topic. Students will need to know what they want their audience to come away from their blog or website thinking and try to come up with pictures and text that will convey that argument. As they research an issue, they will need to make an argument to help change that problem and they will need to choose pictures and text that will encourage community members to act. Rhetorical assignments such as these require problem-solving skills, and will thus increase students' critical thinking skills.

Recognizing Bias in Different Sources

Students need to learn to recognize bias in the different sources they encounter. The WPA Outcomes Statement states that students need to identify sources, and then evaluate these sources for credibility, accuracy, timeliness and bias as part of the critical thinking skills they need to develop (WPA Outcomes 2014). Students need to know that not everything they read on the internet is 100 percent accurate. They will have to analyze the sources, evaluate them for validity, infer a conclusion based on the information they observe, and be objective to evaluate fairly. Their critical thinking skills will improve as they follow those steps when analyzing the different sources they want to

use in their research. Students need to know that most sites have an agenda. While some sites just want to inform, some want to persuade you to act or think in a certain way. These sites will present opinion in a way that will look like fact, but students need to recognize that bias.

An online photography-themed class will teach students to recognize bias in sources they find on the internet. Most people communicate using technology and the internet has made it possible for anyone to publish and post things online. Because of this “there is a need to consider the viability of information arriving via a different route that modifies traditional notions of text” (Radia and Stapleton 163). When students do their research online, they often come up with unconventional sources, such as blogs. In the past, students have been dissuaded from using these kinds of sources; but instead of dissuading or forbidding students from using the latest 2.0 technologies that they know, teachers should use these technologies in their instructions as objects of analysis and as writing and research resources (Purdy 48). Teachers should encourage students to use these unconventional sources in their research. Encouraging students to examine unconventional sources can help them see bias and uncover logical fallacies (Radia and Stapleton 157). Students should also analyze more conventional sources such as scholarly articles, which could also have bias, agendas, and logical fallacies that need to be examined.

I will help my students recognize bias by having them look at several different likely sources and having them find the bias in those sources. They will also have to write a reflective essay as part of their research paper stating why they chose different sites,

what bias they found in those sites and why those sites were good for the argument they are presenting in the research paper. Analyzing the sources they find in their research will improve their critical thinking skills. My students will also create their own unconventional sources as they create several blogs or other websites to reach outside audiences, which will help them see bias in their own writing.

Blending Visual and Verbal Communications

The WPA Outcomes Statement states that students should be able to see the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements in what they read as well as what they compose (WPA Outcomes 2014). Learning to see the interplay between verbal and nonverbal elements in a text helps strengthen students' critical thinking skills. I did not learn to combine images and text because the educational system at that time seemed "designed specifically to wean children off their inclinations for images, pictures, drawings, and color, only to replace these visual fancies with increasingly nonvisual texts" (Sheehan 81). And it seems that this is still the case in a lot of schools. The creative often takes a backseat to literal communications.

"As a child moves further into the educational system, he or she finds that the visual arts, such as painting, film, ... and even architecture, are viewed with increased skepticism, typically consigned to the realm of ... entertainment – and budget cuts. Then, in advanced grades, the literal realm almost wholly replaces the visual as the primary modes of reasoning and expression." (Sheehan 81)

So now, in this increasingly visual world, "few people have been actually taught how to reason and express themselves visually" (Sheehan 82). Nancy Allen reiterates this point by pointing out that language is favored by those who write and theorize about language

and thinking—academic writers who are adept with language – and Allen says “they may be biased in language’s favor” (“Relationships” 4). She seconds what Sheehan says: “our educational system uses language as the primary tool to bring us through the various stages of academic learning. Drawing, used spontaneously by young children, in school become relegated to ‘art classes’” (Allen “Relationships” 4). And as long as teachers focus on the verbal modes of thinking and communicating, students will increasingly learn to think and write for a nonvisual world that no longer exists (Sheehan 82).

“[T]he use of visuals along with traditional narrative elements work to develop multiliteracies by encouraging students to augment description in their [documents] with images as they often do in their social media-infused lives” (Sanchez et al. 124). Students will realize their class assignments relate to what they do outside of class, which will help them see that these assignments can transfer to skills in other parts of their lives. When blending the visual and the verbal, students must know that pictures presented with written work are not and should not be just illustrations, which will improve their critical thinking as they interpret pictures and draw inferences as to why those pictures are included with the text (Leahy and Rindge 115). Pictures carry their own message, especially when creating an argument or when selling a product. Many magazines have ads for hair products that show women with beautiful hair, thus claiming that if you use their product you will have beautiful hair like the model. They don’t write in the text of the ad, “If you use this product you will have hair like so-and-so;” the picture says that for them. “[L]iving in an intensely visual world, [students] are constantly bombarded

with visual-verbal messages and [are becoming] the creators of such messages” (Leahy and Rindge 118).

In my photography-themed composition course, students will learn that photographs frame how we read a text, and written text can frame how we view a picture (Fortune 112). A picture can join different texts “by providing a common lens through which to read them, even as the...texts invite us to view different features of the picture to the point that each text renders a different picture by interacting with different aspects of the image” (Fortune 113). Pictures can shape how our audience reads our text and in turn the text can shape how they see and interpret a picture.

When students combine the visual and verbal, they need to understand how the visual works. They need to understand that “vision is selective,” and that, when looking at something, a person fixates on things that will help them solve a problem (Sheehan 82). Seeing is a process where we notice some things, but we don’t really pay attention to a vast majority of what we see; it just recedes into the background (Sheehan 83). Students need to understand this as they combine images with their written texts. If students want to reach an audience, they need to know how to make sure people will notice the images and text that make their point and what will convince the audience to read more. Students also need to remember that people scan documents to find information that will help them solve a problem. As human beings, we select what visual stimuli we pay attention to according to our goals and interests. We only pay attention to that which will help us meet a goal or solve a problem (Sheehan 84).

The assignments in my photography-themed composition class will combine the visual and the verbal. There will be assignments that will only be verbal and assignments that will be only visual which will help with their problem solving as they decide what pictures to use and why. Reading their fellow classmates' work, they will have the opportunity to interpret the pictures used and they will see how their peers' interpretations are different than their own. By the end of the semester, students will write documents using both the visual and the verbal to create an argument. The photo essay and research blog will help students learn to combine the visual and verbal. They should be thinking about audience with these assignments and about how to present information and pictures in such a way that will reach that audience. The blog will be targeted to members of their communities. Students will decide how best to present their information with pictures to engage that audience, improving critical thinking skills.

Through the photo essay assignment and the picture story assignment, students will come to understand that they can tell any story they want with pictures, but their audience may not interpret it as the same story the student thought they were writing. "The visual images...provide the guidance, and the viewers write their own stories" ("Telling Our Stories" Allen 138). Students need to understand this concept when creating a document with images for a rhetorical purpose. These different assignments will give students the opportunity to practice blending the visual with the verbal. Students will practice nearly every week combining these two modes of communication to create the most effective documents. These assignments will prepare them to communicate effectively with peers, coworkers, and customers or clients.

WRITING CONVENTIONS

This photography-themed composition class will do what other, more traditional, composition courses do. It will improve writing mechanics by **giving students plenty of opportunities to write and revise**. It will require students to compose in different genres and for different audiences, which will help them know the level of formality they should use. This class will teach students copyright and fair use laws for texts and photographs unlike most composition classes. Other composition classes talk about copyright for text, but not many discuss copyright issues with pictures. A few assignments will require them to do research, and they will have to know the **citation conventions** for citing those works in their research.

Composing and Revising Practice

This photography-themed composition course, just like other composition courses, will give students plenty of opportunities to write. Students will practice writing through the threaded discussion online. One

“advantage of this tool relates to student writing skills, which many academics believe are on the decline. The use of this medium inherently forces students to write more than they normally would in traditional on-campus classes, and the increased practice has the potential to improve the quality of their writing.” (Lieblein 166)

Most of the assignments and requirements in this online photography-themed class will give students writing practice. Students will write on the discussion board, analyze a social media picture, write essays, and turn one of those essays into a blog or website.

With each of these written assignments, they will have the opportunity to peer review then revise their writing based on the feedback they receive.

Students will be required to write on a weekly threaded discussion where they will discuss the readings they did, the video they watch and the pictures they analyze as well as include feedback for their peer reviews. They will write a rhetorical essay and an interpretive essay on the same picture which will build on each other. They will also be writing a photo essay, which will tell a story, and a research essay, which will have to be about an issue in their community.

Applying Citation Conventions

Students need to know about copyright and fair use laws so they don't unwittingly break those laws. Knowledge and the practice of adhering to these laws will keep our students honest. They need to know that finding a picture online doesn't mean they can use it without consent or without giving proper credit where due. Having students work with pictures can help them "develop a critical understanding of issues of intellectual property and fair use" (Dubisar and Palmeri 78). The use of pictures will require students to learn "about copyright laws and [to search] for reusable [material]" (VanKooten and Berkley 154). Learning about the copyright laws will require students to know how to properly cite material they use that is not their own. Most teachers have given up on physical handbooks for citation and usually just refer students to sites like Purdue OWL for their citation information. The students in my online class would have an advantage using these sources since they are already working online.

My class will require students to write a research paper, in which they will include sources that they need to cite properly. They will have to research a picture and the background of that picture, which will require additional proper citations. If they use pictures that they do not take, they will have to give credit to the people who took those pictures. Many students now don't even think about sharing and editing pictures or memes they find on social media or other sites on the internet. They need to learn that they need to cite these pictures.

To make sure the pictures on websites are accessible to visually impaired readers, it is important for students to know how to create ALT tags so the screen reader will describe the picture. Students need to know how to write successful ALT tags so they can reach as wide an audience as they can and they don't exclude anyone who might be interested in reading their documents online. HTML standard requires that every image have an ALT tag. If a student had a picture of the bears fighting that is included in the lesson module later, they would write an ALT tag similar to this: ``. This will allow visually impaired readers to visualize what the picture looks like. Students will need to remember that their ALT tags need to be descriptive and useful, but also short. Their ALT tags should not be a paragraph long or even a full sentence. My class will teach students the importance of creating ALT tags and how to create ALT tags for the images they use in their online documents. This will make sure students are up-to-date on matters of accessibility and give them the know-how to create online documents for when they are required to create online documents with pictures in their careers.

COMPOSING IN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENTS

An online photography-themed composition class will give students the opportunity to **work in electronic environments** with the different online tools available to them, and it will prepare them to be comfortable using different online tools in their upper-level classes and in their professions after they graduate, so it will **build on rather than resist technology**. They will learn to collaborate with others digitally and will learn to give and receive feedback on work they read online.

Writing and Sharing Texts Online

The goal of my class will be to get students working online. An online photography-themed composition class will teach students to draft, review, revise, edit and share texts via the internet. It will get them used to working online as well as giving and receiving feedback of their work online. This will be natural to do in an online class since that is the only way to share texts to peer review and revise if you never meet face to face. There will probably be hang ups with this process if people use different types of files, but as long as I state at the beginning of the course how work should be saved before it is shared online, it will ensure that students should be able to read each other's work. This class will also encourage students to use many different sources in their research essays. This will require them to look at conventional, online journals and library databases and unconventional sources such as blogs.

My class will be delivered online so students will work with online tools and share their work online. They will need to get on a social networking site and analyze a

picture. They will make several blogs, or other websites, to reach an audience outside of academia. They will write a research essay, which will require them to go outside of the class site to find sources for their research. They will also have to find the history of a picture they find online on which they choose to do an interpretive essay. For the history of the picture, students should look at when the picture was taken; if it was connected to a story in the newspaper or magazine; why the picture was connected to the story; the context of when and where the picture was taken; and where it was displayed.

Building on, Rather Than Resisting, Technology

I want to embrace the technology that exists and prepare myself and my students for new technology as it becomes available. Students need to know how to work professionally with the technology they have at their fingertips because they may use such technology in their careers. They need to know how to compose in electronic environments. I will teach my students to use technology for more than just social needs.

Assignments in my course will build on students' current knowledge and encourage them to use online tools rather than resisting technology. Students need to adapt quickly to different technological and online tools, but this does not seem to be an issue for most students today (Dringus 192). "Traditionally, students come to school 'powered-up' and wired with the newest technologies available – but often they must leave them at the door, since faculty do not use them in classrooms and may even regard them with suspicion" (Roblyer et al. 134). But this online photography-themed class will encourage students to use the technology they have and already want to use. "Teachers

can no longer be suspicious of the newest technology, in fact, as teachers, we can no longer ignore these multimodal texts in our classrooms” (J. Murray 8).

Many school policies have focused on governing students’ use of technology, through means of limiting the amount of access students have to technology. Many public schools try to ban students from having cell phones in the classroom. Debates over whether or not texting destroys students’ writing abilities and concerns that cell phones need to be banned from classrooms because they are distractions

“seem to focus on a moot feature of the changing reality of writing: newer composing and digital technologies are highly integrated into many students’ lives, they are part of the 21st century landscape of writing, and attempting to prevent students from using these composing technologies is an uphill battle.” (Moore et al. 11)

Marie Nordmark reports on a 2016 survey that “highlighted that 28% of students in upper secondary school perceive that they become distracted in their school work on a daily basis by social media or texting” and “16% of students are distracted” every day by their fellow classmates’ use of social media or texting (Nordmark 57). If these social media technologies are distracting students from class work, but these technologies are how students compose text in their lives, shouldn’t we be teaching them to compose effectively with these tools? Teachers need to find ways to scaffold the technologies students use every day into student learning which will encourage students to use these technologies to help them become better writers and will equip them to succeed after they graduate.

The ubiquitous nature of digital tools makes it logical to use pictures as well as technology to teach students to reach different audiences (J. Murray 2-3). Technologies

such as Instagram, Facebook, blogs, and Twitter have changed the way students express themselves— “what [they] think to say, how [they] think to say it, and the audience [they] say it to” (Kleinman 273). Encouraging the use of social media and other online technological tools will help students think differently about what they want to say, and will encourage them to be more cognizant about their rhetorical choices. Students will need to know how to use these technological tools to communicate professionally because many of the jobs they pursue after graduation will require them to use various communication technologies.

As students use the technology they bring with them to the classroom, they will see how that technology “fits with the convergence of modes that occurs in increasingly pervasive digital technologies, [and] helps [students] in composition classes see their composing of print in new ways” (Prins 148). The technology students have available to them makes it even easier to reach millions of people (Sheehan 78). Teachers need to show students ways to communicate effectively in this digital age, where almost everyone has the ability to compose for an audience, and not just view what others have composed. If students learn to utilize and manipulate visual texts, they will become active members of a visual culture that will become even more prevalent over the next few years. They won’t just be observers of what others think; they will be able to reach a broad audience to share their own ideas (Sheehan 79). Students use technology to form who they are and how they see the world, so they need to learn how to express themselves meaningfully and take responsibility for the consequences of the power they have to communicate with the world.

Many composition classes do not yet use 2.0 technologies to teach composition. Universities require students to take composition courses to prepare “[them] for future writing beyond the academy, but are they meeting this goal if they are not accounting for the 21st century differences” in composition such as cellphones and social media (Moore et al. 9)? Students write more than ever with the many composing technologies available to them. They change their composition practices before writing pedagogies can offer scaffolded strategies to compose efficiently using the different composing technologies available to invent, draft, revise, and deliver texts. Students embrace newer technology the day it is released, so teachers need to consider how they can integrate relevant composing technologies into their composition pedagogies (Moore et al. 2, 10). With students immersed in technology as they communicate with each other, teachers need to think about why students use different writing technologies (Moore et al. 2). “Social and cultural contexts impact how students use writing technologies,” and we need to keep this in mind as we use these technologies in our writing pedagogies (et al. Moore 2).

My class is taught online, which means that students will use technology every time they log in to the class site. Several assignments also require them to use online tools such as blogs and social media sites. These assignments require students to become familiar with different online technologies.

CONCLUSION

By meeting the WPA Outcome goals and encouraging students to analyze the rhetoric of the world around them, this course will better prepare students to work in the technological workforce that is becoming more prevalent. My online photography-themed composition course will help students know how to use different technologies to compose in a more professional manner, since many of them already communicate with these different technologies on a personal level. Many employers look for employees who can communicate with images effectively so they can reach a broader, more diverse audience. This course adds to what has already been done in the composition field as textbooks are calling for multimedia composition. Just concentrating on composing with images and text forces students to learn to communicate without the help of sound or video.

This course will help teachers show students how their composition skills affect their lives. The skills students learn in this course will transfer over to and enhance how they communicate daily. This course will engage teachers as they learn to bring new technologies into the classroom. This course will facilitate teachers to expand their teaching strategies to encompass the many opportunities presented to them through different technologies and texts.

“New technologies have also ushered in expanded avenues for the circulation and distribution of texts that are more instantaneous and diverse than ever before, bringing our students in touch with new audiences and opening them up to an ever-widening array of conversations.” (Lauer 61)

Teachers who take advantage of these new technologies and teach students to effectively communicate with images as well as text will be preparing their students for future work and communicative opportunities, which is what my photography-themed course would do. Teachers need to be willing to add to what has already been done based on what I found in the composition textbooks about how words and images relate and how images act as a text that convey meaning themselves.

Knowing how to communicate with images both in online platforms and in traditional print is an immense benefit for professionals today. Many jobs require employees to have online and visual communication skills. “Technology-infused position titles ... signal to prospective students and funding agencies a more contemporary focus and relevance” to the business world (Lauer 71). Students need to know how to use pictures and text so that their target audience will want to buy their product, to vote for them, or to take a specific action. This online photography-themed composition course will give students the tools they need to persuade an audience, work online, work with others in school and at work, communicate effectively with words and with pictures, recognize bias in the things they read or hear, and think critically about their own work as well as the work of others.

SYLLABUS OUTLINE

Week 1

- Read “Social Media Photography: Construing subjectivity in Instagram images”
- Analyze pictures found in social networking sites. (Sanchez et al. 119). Students will upload the picture found on a social networking site and talk about why they think the person loaded it and how people may (or did) react to it and why.
- Write introduction Post—include pictures.

Week 2

- Read Terry Barrett’s *Criticizing Photography* chapters 1&2.
- Picture story
- Write a rhetorical analysis on one or more pictures of their choosing.

Week 3

- Look at pictures of protest photography and answer discussion questions.
- Peer Review of rhetorical analysis. Finish final draft.
- Discussion on knowing your audience to raise rhetorical awareness.
- Read chapter 3 -*Criticizing Photography*. Learn about Exposure and do aperture picture writing exercise.

Week 4

- Rhetorical analysis due.
- Read Chapter 8 -*Criticizing Photography*.
- Start Interpretive Essay on the same picture they did the rhetorical analysis on.
- Discuss composition and relate to writing. Do composition writing exercise.

Week 5

- Read *Criticizing Photography* chapter 5
- Discuss space & focus and relate to writing
- Peer review interpretive essay

Week 6

- Interpretive essay due.
- Read *The Sweet Flypaper of Life* By Roy DeCarava and Langston Hughes as an introduction to the photo essay
- Introduce Photo essay and discuss reflection essay
- Discuss juxtaposition.

Week 7

- Do preliminary research paper
- Discuss perspective and relate to writing
- Work on Photo essay
- Discussion Board: Interpreting a Picture

Week 8

- Watch PBS *American Photography* all 3 parts
- Photo essay peer review

Week 9

- Photo essay due.
- Reflective essay on photo essay due.
- Start research paper writing

Week 10

- Continue writing research paper—take pictures
- Discussion Board: Respond to picture

Week 11

- Peer review research paper
- Discussion Board: Interpreting a picture

Week 12

- Introduce creating online document from the research essay – using pictures.

Week 13

- Work research paper into a blog

Week 14

- Peer review research blog

Week 15

- Research paper/blog due
- Reflective Paper Due
- Discussion Board: Top 10 take-aways

MODULES

Week 1

To encourage students to read the article before analyzing a social media picture, have the discussion for the reading due earlier in the week than the social networking pictures discussion.

Have students read: Zappavigna, Michele (2016). “Social Media Photography: Construing subjectivity in Instagram Images.” *Visual Communication*. 15 (3), 271-292
Discussion questions on reading: (*note: With all of the discussion board posts, students should be graded on responding to their classmates’ posts as well as posting their own responses.)

1. Zappavigna says, “the meanings [are] made through the visual choices construed in social media images” (Zappavigna 272). How is this so?
2. “One way in which social media has influenced camera phone photography is through affording the expression of a form of visual co-presence arising out of the temporal nature of social streaming technologies, inflected by the portability of mobile media. These affordances mean that a style of ‘you could be here with me’ photography has emerged in which photographers include part of themselves in the image and invite the viewer to imagine themselves into the frame” (Zappavigna 272). Why is it that people want to take pictures in a way that suggests that the viewer could be with them? Is that rubbing it in that they are having fun and their friends aren’t?

3. “Despite the potential for ‘instant’ image publication, it is not the case that most Instagram images are simply rough ‘point and shoot’ style photos with little regard to design. Instagram images usually make use of a set of post-processing techniques such as filtering, cropping, blurring, etc.” (Zappavigna 273). Do you edit pictures before you post them on social media? What edits or filters do you use? Why do you choose to use those edits?
4. “When a viewer clicks on an image, a larger version of the photograph together with its caption is displayed. Above the caption is the user’s chosen icon and username, and a timestamp showing when the image was posted to the service. Below the caption are the names of other users who have ‘favorited’ the post, indicating positive assessment of the image. There are also two comments that have been posted about the image, one by another user, and a reply by the photographer” (Zappavigna 273-275). What has the ‘favorite’ option done to our perception of ourselves?
5. “Images containing faces appear to generate the most ‘likes’ and comments, and the most common type of image is what is popularly known as the ‘selfie,’ a form of self-portrait taken with the front camera of a smartphone” (Zappavigna 275). Why do pictures with faces get more ‘likes’ than those without faces? Why do you ‘like’ pictures on social media?
6. “An image may either engage the viewer in contact, through the gaze of the character out to the viewer, or invite the viewer to observe in images with no gaze. For example, the selfie image...depicts a direct gaze out to viewers, inviting

them to participate in direct contact. At the same time, in narrative texts, the image can be mediated through either an inscribed ‘as character’ choice (e.g. part of the character such as hands, feet, or shadow depicted as emerging from the lower frame) or ‘along with character’ (e.g. the backview of a character depicted in the foreground signaling a shared view). Mediation may also be inferred through a sequence of images through the choice of angle and the kind of affect displayed in the represented participants” (Zappavigna 276-277). What do you think of this statement? Why do you want to include a part of yourself in the picture?

7. “While self-portraiture is the most frequent genre seen on Instagram, there is only one instance of a self-portrait of Flickrrika in the dataset. All other selfies in the feed are images of the user with her children, suggesting how integral motherhood is to this user’s identity. This type of selfie offers a view of motherhood as relationship” (Zappavigna 283-284). How can we interpret the people on social media? Does this make you rethink the pictures you post?

Have students upload a picture they found on a social networking site. They should discuss why they thought the person who put it on the social networking site loaded it and how people may react to it, (or how people have reacted to it) and why.

Discussion questions they should consider when writing this post:

1. What does this picture tell you about the person who posted it? (Try to exclude your personal knowledge of that person.) What is the message you get from this picture? What do you see in this picture?

2. Have the students choose a picture they have uploaded on a social networking site and answer the following questions: Why did you upload that picture? How have people reacted to it? What have they said about it in their comments? Is that how you thought people would react? Analyze these two pictures using the questions above.

On a separate discussion forum, write an introduction about yourself (as the instructor) and then have students write their own introductions. Pictures must be included. Have them answer: Why did they choose the picture they did? Does it show more about who you are than just the words or your post do?

Week 2

Have students choose 5 pictures to tell a story. The pictures they choose may not contain nudity or be too violent. (If they think they have a good reason for choosing a picture that may not be acceptable, they must first send the picture to you, the instructor, before including it in their final work.) As a class, discuss what kinds of pictures are allowed in these stories and in all of their other assignments. The students will help write the rules dictating what kinds of pictures will be allowed and which will not. If a student feels they need to use a specified picture for a rhetorical reason, they may share that reason with the instructor. If the instructor thinks it is a valid reason they should then ask the class if they think the picture would be appropriate for that specified document. This is included to keep students from compromising their own personal morals as they must peer review other students' papers. Including these restrictions will not hamper the students' ability to learn to compose with pictures. It should help them use caution when choosing pictures because if people in the class may be offended by a certain picture, then there is a good chance that a person in their target audience may be offended. The students will tell a story using only those 5 pictures. They may not use any words. The way they arrange the pictures should tell the story. They can choose any story they want to tell. Encourage students to take their own pictures, but they can use pictures they find if they give credit to the photographer. After posting their picture stories, they will respond to other class members' picture stories so they can see if the story they tried to tell is the story that was read. If a discussion about what story a certain student 'told' with

pictures comes up, encourage students not to tell other classmates what story they meant to tell.

Have students read Chapter 1 (About Art Criticism): Sections: “Intro”; “Defining Criticism”; “Kinds of Criticism”; “Stances Toward Criticism”; “Criticizing Criticism”; and “The Value of Criticism” -and-

Chapter 2 (Describing Photographs) from Terry Barrett’s *Criticizing Photography*: Skip section “Descriptions of Avedon’s ‘In the American West.’”

Discussion Questions on Reading:

Chapter 1:

1. According to this chapter, what is art criticism and how can it help us to appreciate photographs?
2. Why would it be “more beneficial to ask questions about meaning” to appreciate photography (Barrett 3)?
3. “In some cases, a carefully thought out response to a photograph may result in negative appreciation or informed dislike. More often than not...careful critical attention to a photograph or group of photographs will result in fuller understanding and positive appreciation” (Barrett 3). Think of a photograph that you either really like or dislike (not a personal one). Why do you like or dislike that picture? If you understood more about that picture, would it change how you feel about it? Can you think of a piece of information that would change the way you respond to or interpret the picture?

4. Lucy Lippard says that “critical objectivity and neutrality [are] false myths.” Do you agree with that statement (Barrett 10)? Is it possible to be objective and neutral when writing about a photograph since photographs can stir up emotions so easily?
5. A.D. Coleman studied and wrote about photography because “he realized that photography was shaping him and his culture” (Barrett 13). This was in the 1960s. How is this even more true in today’s culture?
6. What are some descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative questions that you can ask when critically observing a photograph? How can these questions “expand one’s awareness of an artwork and considerably alter one’s perception of the work” (Barrett 13)?

Chapter 2:

1. “Critics...might first describe to themselves privately before they write, but in print they might start with a judgment, or an interpretive thesis, or a question, or a quotation, or any number of literary devices in order to get and hold the attention of their readers” (Barrett 16).
2. Edward Weston said, “By varying the position of his camera, his camera angle, or the focal length of his lens, the photographer can achieve an infinite number of varied compositions with a single stationary subject” (Barrett 26). Later Barrett says “Photographs, no matter how objective or scientific, are the constructions of individuals with beliefs and biases, and we need to consider them as such. To describe subject, form, medium, and style is to consider photographs as pictures

made by individuals and not to mistake them for anything more or less” (Barrett 35). What do these two quotes tell you about how we should approach criticizing photographs?

Look at this picture and write a quick analysis (500 or more words) of it based on what you read in this chapter (pretend you are a critic). Try to write it in a way that would catch and hold the attention of your readers.

Figure 1-1: Changing of the guard



Have the students read about rhetoric and rhetorical terms to help them gain a little knowledge so they can become more aware of the rhetoric used around them. Have students watch YouTube videos that explain basic rhetorical terms. Have students find an

ad, either on the internet or in a magazine, etc. Have them post a picture of the ad and write a short rhetorical analysis of the ad using the information learned.

Written assignment: Write a short (2 pages) rhetorical analysis of a picture, but this picture needs to not be one from your own personal collection. Find a picture that intrigues you. Include the picture before the analysis (not in the page count) and upload it to the discussion forum. Then respond to two other classmates' rhetorical analyses.

To help students start their analysis, have them summarize what they think the main point of the picture is, then have them list all the details of the picture that stand out to them. Have them do some brainstorming about the roles that either ethos, logos, or pathos or a combination of the three play in the picture. Have them also brainstorm the kind of assumptions that might be construed from the picture. Have students write a paragraph or two of how they see the details of the pictures contributing to the overall effect or point of the picture. Students will turn this brainstorming paper in this week while the rhetorical analysis is not due for a couple of weeks.

Week 3

Students will peer review rhetorical analyses of two or three classmates (depending on the size of the class). Students then need to take what was said in their peer review to help them finish their final draft.

Post the following three pictures to the discussion forum and have them answer the discussion questions that follow. Again, students will be graded on responses to their classmates' posts as well as their own post.

Figure 1-2: Dorothea Lange Japanese Internment Picture



Figure 1-3: Lewis Hine Child Labor Picture



Figure 1-4: James “Spider” Martin Civil Rights Picture



Discussion prompt: Respond to the pictures using the following questions as a guide. You can further the discussion with whatever intrigues you about the photographs as well.

1. Why do you think the photographer took this picture or do you think the photographer even had a reason for taking the photograph? Can you tell? How did each picture make you feel?
2. What message do you think they are trying to convey?
3. What are they trying to do to their audience?

These questions should help get into a discussion about knowing the audience you are trying to reach and how rhetorical awareness can help people reach the audience they desire with either pictures or text.

Have students read Chapter 3 (Interpreting Photography) from *Criticizing Photography*: Skip section “Interpretive Perspectives”.

Discussion Board Questions:

Chapter 3:

1. “But all photographs – even simple ones – demand interpretation in order to be fully understood and appreciated. They need to be recognized as pictures about something and for some communicative and expressive purpose” (Barrett 36). Barrett goes on to say “Photographs are partial and are inflected. People’s knowledge, beliefs, values, and attitudes – heavily influenced by their culture – are reflected in the photographs they take” (Barrett 36). “Photographers make choices not only about what to photograph but also about how to capture an image on film, and often these choices are very sophisticated” (Barrett 36-37). “[A]ll photographs, even very straightforward, direct, and realistic-looking ones, need to be interpreted. They are not innocent, free of insinuations and devoid of

prejudices, nor are they simple mirror images. They are made, taken, and constructed by skillful artists and deserve to be read, explained, analyzed, and deconstructed” (Barrett 37). What are all of these quotes telling us about photographs?

2. “to interpret a photograph is to tell someone else...what one understands about a photograph, especially what one thinks a photograph is about” (Barrett 37). “All photographs connote; and without some understanding that photographs connote or imply or suggest; viewers will not get beyond the obvious and will see photographs as reality rather than pictures of reality” (Barrett 39). “All interpretations share a fundamental principle – that photographs have meaning deeper than what appears on their surfaces” (Barrett 42). What do these quotes tell you about interpreting a photograph? What will you need to remember when you are writing your interpretive paper?
3. “In judging photographs, the critic attempts to determine what the photographer intended to communicate with the photograph and then on that basis judges whether the photographer has been successful or not” (Barrett 50). How would you decide what the photographer intended?

Have students read about Exposure (shutter speed and aperture) in a picture and have them do the aperture writing exercise that follows:

Have students take a picture with a low shutter speed and a high shutter speed. Then they will take a picture with a low f/stop or aperture and a high f/stop or aperture. What is the difference? What is in focus? If they just have a cell phone to work with and

can't adjust the shutter speed or aperture then they can find their own examples online.

How would the picture be different if the picture were taken with a different shutter speed or f/stop? (Students will have two posts in this discussion board. One for the shutter speed and aperture pictures and discussion, and one for the writing exercise that follows.)

Display the two pictures of balls below, with the following writing prompt:

Write a paragraph about each picture. Focus your writing on what is in focus in each picture. How does describing what is in focus change the picture you create with your writing? Did you describe things that weren't in focus? How much?

Figure 1-5: Low Aperture



Figure 1-6: High Aperture



Week 4

Students will turn in their final draft for their rhetorical analysis.

Students will read Chapter 8 (Writing and Talking About Photographs) from *Criticizing Photography*.

Students will start their interpretive essay:

Have students use the same picture they did their rhetorical analysis on for their interpretive essay. Students should research background info and context for the picture and include this information in their analysis. This paper should be 4-5 pages long. Have students use the following suggestions from *Criticizing Photography* as a prewriting exercise to start their interpretive essay: (They will turn this prewriting exercise in at the end of the week.)

- “we have identified four main questions that can be asked of any photograph. What is here? What is it about? Is it good? Is it art? Answering any of these questions will give you something significant to write about” (Barrett 168).
- “To write well, you need to want to write. Choose a photograph ... or an exhibition that interests you and about which you care. You may be interested because you like the work or because you object to it” (Barrett 168).
- “Study the photograph intently, and jot down notes as you reflect on the work. Be sure your notes are complete” (Barrett 168).
- “Describe both subject matter and form. Also note the presentational environment of the work, or its external context. Where did the [picture] originate? Why is it being shown here and now? If it is a show, who organized it and why?... Recall

what you know about the photographer and the time and place the photograph was made” (Barrett 169).

- “While you are observing a photograph and deciding what to write about and how, listen to your feelings and determine what in the work has triggered them. Freely write down phrases and words that come to mind: the more phrases you write now, the fewer you will have to construct later. Afterwards you can arrange them logically and discard the irrelevant. Allow yourself time to set aside your work for a while...write down new thoughts. Decipher why you care about the work, and determine what you want someone else to know about it and your reaction to it” (Barrett 169).
- “If you are judging the work, be clear in your appraisal and offer reasons for it. Your criteria for judging work ought to be implicitly available to your reader, if not explicitly stated” (Barrett 171).
- “Be persuasive by offering reasons and evidence in support of your interpretations and judgments and in your use of language” (Barrett 171).
- “[Critics] write to be read with some enjoyment, in a way that will involve the reader in what they have to say. What do you want to tell your reader, and how do you want to tell it” (Barrett 175)?
- “Convey your enthusiasm for the photograph with your choice of words. Once you’ve described it in sufficient detail, don’t assume that the photograph’s meaning is now evident. Provide your reader with your interpretation. Be sure that your judgment of the work is clear” (Barrett 176).

Post the following picture and prompts from *Criticizing Photography*: (Tell students that they will not be able to see their other classmates' posts until they have finished their own response.)

Figure 1-7: Buddha Statue



“Describe what you see... consider subject matter...Consider how form relates to subject matter...Interpret the photograph by questions it raises...Avoid hasty judgments...Consider presentational environments...Ask how the photograph would want to be judged...Consider assumptions...Be honest and open” (Barrett 180- 182).

After you post your response you will be able to see your fellow classmates' responses. How did your classmates describe and interpret the picture differently; how

were the interpretations the same? Why do you think they were different if you were looking at the same picture in the same context?

Remember: “Criticism can be kind and critical.”

Discuss composition in terms of photography and have students do the following composition exercise:

Students will take pictures thinking about the composition and exposure ahead of time. They will upload their favorite 5 pictures and explain why they took that picture and why they think it is a good composition and exposure. They can also upload a picture that didn't work out so well and explain why that composition didn't work or why that exposure didn't work.

Week 5

Have students turn in their interpretive essay rough draft for peer review. (Make sure students are peer reviewing different students' papers than they did for the rhetorical analysis.)

Learn about focus in photography. Explain that focus takes both exposure and composition into account. They can have a high aperture so nothing is blurry and still have a single part of the picture be the focus because of the composition. For the focus writing exercise, have students choose one photograph. The students will write two paragraphs on the same photograph. For the first paragraph, describe the aspects of the photo that are most important or that your eye is drawn to. Describe that part of the photo in detail with just a small glimpse of the rest of the photo. For the second paragraph, describe the entire picture in detail. How are your paragraphs different?

Learn about space in photography. Space in a photograph is the amount of background or foreground a photographer chooses to include in an image. This choice is deliberate and the photographer includes more or less background or foreground depending on the story they are trying to tell. Display examples of different space. How does including the different space affect the photograph.

Look at the two pictures below. How does space affect the picture? Write a descriptive paragraph of both pictures. How do your two paragraphs differ? Did one of your paragraphs end up being more descriptive because of the effects of space?

Figure 1-8: Effects of Space (1)



Figure 1-9: Effects of Space (2)



Have students read Chapter 5 (Photographs and Contexts) from *Criticizing Photography*

Discussion questions about the reading: (Have the students state what key passages they found intriguing and why. Let them lead the discussion. After each student has commented maybe add some of these following points if they were not brought up by the students and they seem relevant to the discussion.)

Chapter 5:

1. “Photographs, by nature, are always swatches cut from seamless reality. They are segments; shot from close or afar, with a wide or narrow angle of view. By use of the view finder, photographers include and exclude. In a sense, all photographs are literally ‘out of context’...They are one instant stopped in time” (Barrett 98).
How can this quote help you when interpreting photographs? How could questions like “Why did the photographer include certain elements in this picture and what do you think was excluded?” help you write an interpretive paper?
2. “A photograph in different external context can easily [alter the meaning of a photograph], especially if text is added to it. Photographs are relatively indeterminate in meaning; their meaning can be easily altered by how they are situated, and how they are presented” (Barrett 101). “It is important to examine the context in which a photograph has been placed, whether that be a newspaper, a magazine, a bill board, or a museum gallery...A caption or a placement of a photograph as part of a show may not be fully developed interpretations or reasoned arguments, but they are persuading us to understand an image in a certain way” (Barrett 102-103). Can you think of a picture that may be interpreted two different ways depending on where it is seen?
3. How would you interpret Kruger’s “Untitled (Surveillance)” (Barrett 104)?

Week 6

Have students turn in their final draft for their interpretive essay.

Learn about perspective in photography. Display the pictures below of a subject photographed from different perspectives. How do the different perspectives affect your analysis of the pictures? How do the different perspectives change how you view the subject? Write a paragraph describing each picture. Which paragraph makes the subject more appealing? Why?

Figure 1-10: Perspective (1)



Figure 1-11: Perspective (2)



Students will need to take 10-12 pictures of two different subjects each, varying the time of day they take the picture, the angles, the lighting, etc. Upload your favorite 4 pictures of each subject. Why are these your favorite pictures? How did the different perspectives affect your pictures? How did the different perspectives make you like or dislike the pictures or the subject?

Photography Term: Juxtaposition: Have students look at the picture below. How does this picture show juxtaposition and how does that affect your analysis of it? Take your own picture of juxtaposition.

Figure 1-12: Juxtaposition



Introduce the photo essay:

Have students read *The Sweet Flypaper of Life* by Roy DeCarava and Langston Hughes as an introduction to the photo essay (Leahy and Rindge 117-118).

Discuss Photo Essays in Discussion Board:

What is a photo essay? How do the pictures tell a story even without words?

Think back on your experience writing your story with pictures. Pictures can be their own text without words. Pictures in a photo essay should be enhancing whatever is written.

The photos you include give a context on how to read the text and vice versa.

Exercise to get students working on the essay: To gather photos to use in your photo essay, go out and take photos. You can also use pictures you find. If you are unsure as to what you want your photo essay to be about, take pictures of a lot of different things. Narrow your ideas quickly as you don't have a lot of time. Remember to think about composition, exposure, juxtaposition, perspective and space when taking your photos. List all the ideas you have in mind of what type of story you want to tell. Choose the most interesting or surprising idea you have and free write on it to see where it takes you. Before you narrow down to one, choose a few pictures that you would include if you chose that topic.

Tell students that along with the photo essay, they will have to turn in a reflective essay. They should answer the following questions as they go through the process of writing the photo essay to help them write this reflective essay: How did you decide what to take pictures of and how did you narrow it down? Did you have to take pictures out of the essay after you started writing? Why? Were you able to get your point across with as

few words as possible? Why or why not? Was it more difficult to tell a story with pictures?

Week 7

Students should work on their photo essay.

Discussion Board:

Have students look at the following picture and do the following prompts from

Criticizing Photography:

Figure 1-13: People painting



“Describe what you see... consider subject matter...Consider how form relates to subject matter...Interpret the photograph by questions it raises...Avoid hasty judgments...Consider presentational environments...Ask how the photograph would want to be judged...Consider assumptions...Be honest and open.”

After you post your response you will be able to see your classmates' responses.

How did your classmates describe and interpret the picture differently; how were the interpretations the same? Why do you think they were different if you were looking at the same picture in the same context?

To get students thinking about their topic for their research paper, they should write a list of several possibilities. They need to look at issues in their community that may interest them. They can find these subjects by reading a local paper, going to a city council meeting, etc. Students need to write a 1-2 page paper detailing an idea, or two of what subject they want to look at for their research paper. They need to detail what the issue is and who will be affected (who their intended audience might be) and why that issue is important to them. They need to include some preliminary research that would be included. They also need to take pictures that relate to their topic to use later when they make the research paper into a blog or website. They need to think about their audience and the message they want to convey and take pictures that will help them reach that audience and deliver their message.

Week 8

Photo essay peer review.

Have students watch PBS's *American Photography* parts 1-3 and answer the discussion questions that follow:

1. Why were the photos so important to the people who were affected by the tornado? Why are pictures important to you?
2. Why do people take pictures or display pictures? What would life be like if there were no photographs?
3. Even today, people take pictures all the time. There is the idea that if you don't document it by taking pictures, it didn't happen. Why is this?
4. How did photographs change *National Geographic*? Why did photographs make the magazine more popular?
5. Using your knowledge based on the assignments so far in this class and the movie, how do pictures tell a story? Do you need words to interpret a photograph?
6. How does photography have a power that cannot be stated with words and logic?
7. Why do people keep photographs?

(Part 2)

8. Why is a photograph considered the most trustworthy way to communicate truth? Is this really so?
9. What do pictures do that words can't?
10. How do photographs tell a story? How can a photographer "tell" a story without any words?

11. How do landscape pictures differ from pictures of people? What story do they tell?
12. It has been said you have to be quite thin to look good in a picture. How did these photographs change the way we think about how we should look?
13. How do photographs dictate how we live?

(Part 3)

14. In what ways can a photograph be used to distort the truth?
15. After watching all three videos, what is the power of photography? How can using photographs with words be even more powerful?
16. Do you think the power of the picture is being diluted with pictures so easily produced?

Week 9

Photo essay due along with the reflective essay. The students should use the following prompt to help them write the reflective essay: Think about the choices you made in pictures and words and reflect on what you think went well and what may not have worked as well. Why did you choose the pictures you chose? What story did you want to tell? Did your peers respond differently to your essay than you thought? Did you have to change things after the peer review in order to make your essay successful?

Preliminary research paper due.

Reflection questions on students' preliminary research: Think about your choice of topic. Is it a topic you feel strongly about? Is it a topic you might want to continue to use for your research paper? If not, why? Do the pictures you took show your subject in a negative or favorable light? Did you mean for it to be so? What audience will you want to see the information you convey in your essay?

Start research paper: Write an 8-10 page research paper. Research the same topic you were exploring in your preliminary research. Take pictures of the subject, if needed. Take this opportunity to explore how you feel about your topic as you take pictures. When you know how you feel explore how you think others feel about this same topic and try to take pictures that will maybe help them see how you feel and why it is important to look at your point of view. How can you take pictures to convey how you feel about this topic to an audience? Try to make your argument with just the pictures you take. Continue to look at different sources, making sure you analyze these sources. You will take the information you learned while writing your ethnographic preliminary

research and write a research paper. Find sources that back up your point. You will include a works cited page.

Use the discussion board to ask questions regarding your research essay. You need to use several different sources. Analyze each source you use. Do you think the information is legitimate or not? Why? Why might the author of that site have an agenda? Keep track of these decisions because you will need them when writing a reflective essay at the end of the semester.

Week 10

Have students work on their research essay.

Have students look at the following picture and do the following prompts from *Criticizing Photography*:

Figure 1-14: Taiwanese Traffic



“Describe what you see... consider subject matter...Consider how form relates to subject matter...Interpret the photograph by questions it raises...Avoid hasty judgments...Consider presentational environments...Ask how the photograph would want to be judged...Consider assumptions...Be honest and open.”

After you post your response you will be able to see your fellow classmates' responses. How did your classmates describe and interpret the picture differently; how were the interpretations the same? Why do you think they were different if you were looking at the same picture in the same context?

Week 11

Have students turn in a rough draft of their research essay for peer review.

Have students look at the following picture and do the following prompts from *Criticizing Photography*:

Figure 1-15: English Town



“Describe what you see... consider subject matter...Consider how form relates to subject matter...Interpret the photograph by questions it raises...Avoid hasty judgments...Consider presentational environments...Ask how the photograph would want to be judged...Consider assumptions...Be honest and open.”

After you post your response you will be able to see your fellow classmates’ responses. How did your classmates describe and interpret the picture differently; how

were the interpretations the same? Why do you think they were different if you were looking at the same picture in the same context?

Have students look at the pictures they used in their rhetorical analysis and photo essay and have them do the same analysis as above, trying to be just as objective.

Week 12

Have students read about different online technologies they could use to make their information from their research paper public. Discuss why you would use each different technology based on the audience you want to reach and the tone of the message. The students will have the following prompt to help them get started: You will now use the information you found writing your research essay to create a blog, website, etc. to inform and engage an outside audience. Use pictures to help convey your message. Brainstorm the different technologies you could use to get this information public. While creating this blog, website, etc., write a short reflective essay to define your audience and your reasons for engaging this audience with your topic. What is your goal with this blog, website, etc? This reflective paper will be turned in when you submit your project.

Week 13

Have students work on Research blog or website.

Week 14

Have students peer review their research blog.

Week 15

Research paper and blog due.

Turn in Reflective essay for research paper and blog.

Discussion Board: Top 10 Take-aways

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX

Figure 2-1: WPA Outcome Goals and Assignments

WPA Outcome Goals	Assignments
Gaining Rhetorical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhetorical Analysis • Interpretive Essay • Picture Story • Analyze Social Media Pictures • Create Blog for outside audience • Research paper • Analyze pictures
Writing Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing exercises • Taking pictures to generate ideas, then analyze the pictures • Reflection Paper • Discussion Board
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze Social Media Pictures • Rhetorical Analysis • Interpretive essay • Write photo essay • Turn Research paper into a blog • Picture story • Analyze sources in research paper and Interpretive essay • Read <i>Criticizing Photography</i> • Read “Social Media” • Read Photo Essay • Peer Reviews on assignments
Writing Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Reviews on assignments • Discussion Board Online • Writing exercises • Rhetorical Analysis • Interpretive Essay • Photo Essay • Research Paper
Composing in Electronic Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Discussions • Online Peer Reviews • Social Media site picture analysis • Create blog from Research Paper • Interpretive analysis